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THE

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

OF

OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M.B.

A NEW EDITION, IN FOUR VOLUMES.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS.

VOLUME II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR RICHARDSON & CO.; SHARPE & SON; BALDWYN & CO.; W. BAYNES & SON; G. OFFER: W. ROBINSON & SONS, LIVERPOOL: BARCLAY; LAWSON; AND BURDEKIN, YORK: WHYTE & CO. AND P. BROWN, EDINBURGH: ALSO GRIFFIN & CO. AND WYLIE, GLASGOW.

1821.

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POEMS,

BY

DR GOLDSMITH.

A

PROLOGUE

WRITTEN AND SPOKEN BY THE

POET LABERIUS,

A ROMAN KNIGHT, WHOM CÆSAR FORCED UPON THE STAGE.

PRESERVED BY MACROBIUS.*

What! no way left to shun th' inglorious stage,
And save from infamy my sinking age!
Scarce half alive, oppress'd with many a year,
What in the name of dotage drives me here?
A time there was, when glory was my guide,
Nor force nor fraud could turn my steps aside;
Unaw'd by power, and unappall'd by fear,
With honest thrift I held my honour dear:
But this vile hour disperses all my store,
And all my hoard of honour is no more;
For ah! too partial to my life's decline,
Cæsar persuades, submission must be mine;
Him I obey, whom Heaven itself obeys,
Hopeless of pleasing, yet inclin'd to please.

* This translation was first printed in one of our Author's earliest works, "The Present State of Learning in Europe, 12mo. 1759; but was omitted in the second edition, which appeared in 1774.

Here then at once I welcome every shame,
And cancel at threescore a life of fame;
No more my titles shall my children tell,
The old buffoon will fit my name as well;
This day beyond its term my fate extends,
For life is ended when our honour ends.

THE

DOUBLE TRANSFORMATION;

*A TALE.**

SECLUDED from domestic strife
Jack Book-worm led a college life;
A fellowship at twenty-five
Made him the happiest man alive;
He drank his glass, and crack'd his joke,
And freshmen wonder'd as he spoke.

Such pleasures, unallay'd with care,
Could any accident impair?
Could Cupid's shaft at length transfix
Our swain, arriv'd at thirty-six?
O had the archer ne'er come down
To ravage in a country town!
Or Flavia been content to stop
At triumphs in a Fleet-street shop.
O had her eyes forgot to blaze!
Or Jack had wanted eyes to gaze!
O!——but let exclamations cease,
Her presence banish'd all his peace.
So with decorum all things carried;
Miss frown'd, and blush'd, and then was—married.

Need we expose to vulgar sight
The raptures of the bridal night?

* This and the following Poem were published by DR GOLDSMITH in his Volume of Essays, which appeared in 1765.

Need we intrude on hallow'd ground,
Or draw the curtains clos'd around?
Let it suffice, that each had charms;
He clasp'd a goddess in his arms;
And though she felt his usage rough,
Yet in a man 'twas well enough.

The honey-moon like lightning flew,
The second brought its transports too;
A third, a fourth, were not amiss,
The fifth was friendship mix'd with bliss:
But, when a twelvemonth pass'd away,
Jack found his goddess made of clay;
Found half the charms that deck'd her face
Arose from powder, shreds, or lace;
But still the worst remain'd behind,
That very face had robb'd her mind.

Skill'd in no other arts was she,
But dressing, patching, repartee;
And, just as humour rose or fell,
By turns a slattern or a belle.
'Tis true she dress'd with modern grace,
Half naked at a ball or race;
But when at home, at board or bed,
Five greasy night-caps wrapp'd her head.
Could so much beauty condescend
To be a dull domestic friend?
Could any curtain lectures bring
To decency so fine a thing?
In short, by night, 'twas fits or fretting;
By day, 'twas gadding or coquetting.
Fond to be seen, she kept a bevy
Of powder'd coxcombs at her levee;
The 'squire and captain took their stations,
And twenty other near relations:
Jack suck'd his pipe, and often broke
A sigh in suffocating smoke;

While all their hours were pass'd between
Insulting repartee or spleen.

Thus as her faults each day were known,
He thinks her features coarser grown ;
He fancies every vice she shews,
Or thins her lip, or points her nose :
Whenever rage or envy rise,
How wide her mouth, how wild her eyes ;
He knows not how, but so it is,
Her face is grown a knowing phiz ;
And, though her fops are wondrous civil,
He thinks her ugly as the devil.

Now to perplex the ravell'd noose,
As each a different way pursues,
While sullen or loquacious strife
Promis'd to hold them on for life,
That dire disease, whose ruthless power
Withers the beauty's transient flower :—
Lo ! the small-pox, whose horrid glare
Levell'd its terrors at the fair ;
And, rifling every youthful grace,
Left but the remnant of a face.

The glass, grown hateful to her sight,
Reflected now a perfect fright :
Each former art she vainly tries
To bring back lustre to her eyes ;
In vain she tries her paste and creams
To smooth her skin, or hide its seams ;
Her country beaux and city cousins,
Lovers no more, flew off by dozens ;
The 'squire himself was seen to yield,
And ev'n the captain quit the field.

Poor madam now condemn'd to hack
The rest of life with anxious Jack,

Perceiving others fairly flown,
Attempted pleasing him alone.
Jack soon was dazzled to behold
Her present face surpass the old:
With modesty her cheeks are dy'd,
Humility displaces pride;
For tawdry finery is seen
A person ever neatly clean:
No more presuming on her sway,
She learns good-nature every day:
Serenely gay, and strict in duty,
Jack finds his wife a perfect beauty.

A

NEW SIMILE

IN THE

MANNER OF SWIFT.

Long had I sought in vain to find
A likeness for the scribbling kind;
The modern scribbling kind, who write,
In wit, and sense, and nature's spite:
Till reading, I forget what day on,
A chapter out of Tooke's Pantheon,
I think I met with something there
To suit my purpose to a hair.
But let us not proceed too furious,
First please to turn to god Mercurius!
You'll find him pictur'd at full length,
In book the second, page the tenth:
The stress of all my proofs on him I lay,
And now proceed we to our simile.

Imprimis, Pray observe his hat,
Wings upon either side—mark that.
Well! what is it from thence we gather?
Why these denote a brain of feather.
A brain of feather! very right,
With wit that's flighty, learning light;
Such as to modern bard's decreed;
A just comparison,—proceed.

In the next place, his feet peruse,
Wings grow again from both his shoes;

Design'd, no doubt, their part to bear,
And waft his godship through the air:
And here my simile unites,
For in the modern poet's flights,
I'm sure it may be justly said,
His feet are useful as his head.

Lastly, vouchsafe t' observe his hand,
Fill'd with a snake-encircled wand;
By classic authors term'd caduceus,
And highly fam'd for several uses.
To wit—most wond'rously endu'd,
No poppy water half so good;
For let folks only get a touch,
Its soporific virtue's such,
Though ne'er so much awake before,
That quickly they begin to snore.
Add too, what certain writers tell,
With this he drives men's souls to hell.

Now to apply, begin we then;—
His wand's a modern author's pen;
The serpents round about it twin'd,
Denote him of the reptile kind;
Denote the rage with which he writes,
His frothy slaver, venom'd bites;
An equal semblance still to keep,
Alike too both conduce to sleep.
This difference only, as the God
Drove souls to Tart'rus with his rod,
With his goose-quill the scribbling elf,
Instead of others, damns himself.

And here my simile almost tript,
Yet grant a word by way of postscript.
Moreover Merc'ry had a failing;
Well! what of that? out with it—stealing;

In which all modern bards agree,
Being each as great a thief as he:
But even this deity's existence
Shall lend my simile assistance.
Our modern bards! why what a pox
Are they but senseless stones and blocks?

DESCRIPTION

OF AN

AUTHOR'S BED-CHAMBER.

Where the Red Lion staring o'er the way,
Invites each passing stranger that can pay;
Where Calvert's butt, and Parson's black champagne
Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury-lane;
There, in a lonely room, from bailiffs snug,
The Muse found Scroggen stretch'd beneath a rug;
A window, patch'd with paper, lent a ray,
That dimly shew'd the state in which he lay;
The sanded floor that grits beneath the tread;
The humid wall with paltry pictures spread;
The royal game of goose was there in view,
And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew;
The seasons, fram'd with listing, found a place,
And brave Prince William shew'd his lamp-black face.
The morn was cold, he views with keen desire
The rusty grate unconscious of a fire:
With beer and milk arrears the frieze was scor'd,
And five crack'd tea-cups dress'd the chimney board;
A night-cap deck'd his brows instead of bay,
A cap by night—a stocking all the day!

THE HERMIT;

A BALLAD.

FIRST PRINTED IN MDCCLXV.

THE FOLLOWING

LETTER,

ADDRESSED TO THE

PRINTER OF THE ST JAMES'S CHRONICLE,

APPEARED IN THAT PAPER IN JUNE,

MDCCLXVII.

Sir,

As there is nothing I dislike so much as newspaper controversy, particularly upon trifles, permit me to be as concise as possible in informing a correspondent of yours, that I recommended Blainville's Travels, because I thought the book was a good one, and I think so still. I said, I was told by the bookseller that it was then first published; but in that, it seems, I was misinformed, and my reading was not extensive enough to set me right.

Another correspondent of yours, accuses me of having taken a ballad I published some time ago, from one* by the ingenious Mr Percy. I do not think there is any great resemblance between the two pieces in question. If there be any, his ballad is taken from mine. I read it to Mr Percy some years ago; and he (as we both considered these

* The Friar of Orders Gray. "Reliq. of Anc. Poetry." Vol. I. Book 2. No. 18.

things as trifles at best) told me with his usual good humour, the next time I saw him, that he had taken my plan to form the fragments of Shakspeare into a ballad of his own. He then read me his little Cento, if I may so call it, and I highly approved it. Such petty anecdotes as these are scarcely worth printing; and, were it not for the busy disposition of some of your correspondents, the public should never have known that he owes me the hint of his ballad, or that I am obliged to his friendship and learning for communications of a much more important nature.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

Oliver Goldsmith.

Note.—On the subject of the preceding letter, the reader is desired to consult "The Life of Dr Goldsmith," under the year 1765.

THE HERMIT;

A

BALLAD.

I.

"Turn, gentle Hermit of the dale,
And guide my lonely way,
To where yon taper cheers the vale
With hospitable ray.

II.

"For here forlorn and lost I tread,
With fainting steps and slow;
Where wilds, immeasurably spread,
Seem length'ning as I go."

III.

"Forbear, my son," the Hermit cries,
"To tempt the dangerous gloom;
For yonder faithless phantom flies
To lure thee to thy doom.

IV.

"Here to the houseless child of want
My door is open still;
And though my portion is but scant,
I give it with good will.

V.

" Then turn to-night, and freely share
Whate'er my cell bestows;
My rushy couch and frugal fare,
My blessing and repose.

VI.

" No flocks that range the valley free
To slaughter I condemn;
Taught by that Power that pities me,
I learn to pity them:

VII.

" But from the mountain's grassy side
A guiltless feast I bring;
A scrip with herbs and fruits supplied,
And water from the spring.

VIII.

" Then, pilgrim, turn, thy cares forego;
All earth-born cares are wrong;
Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long."

IX.

Soft as the dew from heaven descends,
His gentle accents fell:
The modest stranger lowly bends,
And follows to the cell.

X.

Far in a wilderness obscure
The lonely mansion lay,
A refuge to the neighb'ring poor
And strangers led astray.

XI.

No stores beneath its humble thatch
Requir'd a master's care;
The wicket, opening with a latch,
Receiv'd the harmless pair.

XII.

And now, when busy crowds retire
To take their evening rest,
The hermit trimm'd his little fire,
And cheer'd his pensive guest:

XIII.

And spread his vegetable store,
And gayly press'd, and smil'd;
And, skill'd in legendary lore,
The lingering hours beguil'd.

XIV.

Around in sympathetic mirth
Its tricks the kitten tries,
The cricket chirrups in the hearth,
The crackling faggot flies.

XV.

But nothing could a charm impart
To sooth the stranger's woe;
For grief was heavy at his heart,
And tears began to flow.

XVI.

His rising cares the Hermit spied,
With answering care oppress:
"And whence, unhappy youth," he cried,
"The sorrows of thy breast?

XVII.

" From better habitations spurn'd,
Reluctant dost thou rove?
Or grieve for friendship unreturn'd,
Or unregarded love?

XVIII.

" Alas! the joys that fortune brings,
Are trifling and decay;
And those who prize the paltry things,
More trifling still than they.

XIX.

" And what is friendship but a name,
A charm that lulls to sleep;
A shade that follows wealth or fame,
But leaves the wretch to weep?

XX.

" And love is still an emptier sound,
The modern fair-one's jest;
On earth unseen, or only found
To warm the turtle's nest.

XXI.

" For shame, fond youth, thy sorrows hush,
And spurn the sex," he said;
But while he spoke, a rising blush
His love-lorn guest betray'd.

XXII.

Surpris'd he sees new beauties rise,
Swift mantling to the view;
Like colours o'er the morning skies,
As bright, as transient too.

XXIII.

The bashful look, the rising breast,
Alternate spread alarms:
The lovely stranger stands confest
A maid in all her charms.

XXIV.

"And ah! forgive a stranger rude,
A wretch forlorn," she cried;
"Whose feet unhallow'd thus intrude
Where Heaven and you reside.

XXV.

"But let a maid thy pity share,
Whom love has taught to stray;
Who seeks for rest, but finds despair
Companion of her way.

XXVI.

"My father liv'd beside the Tyne,
A wealthy lord was he;
And all his wealth was mark'd as mine,
He had but only me.

XXVII.

"To win me from his tender arms,
Unnumber'd suitors came;
Who prais'd me for imputed charms,
And felt, or feign'd a flame.

XXVIII.

"Each hour a mercenary crowd
With richest proffers strove;
Amongst the rest young Edwin bow'd,
But never talk'd of love.

XXIX.

" In humble simplest habit clad,
No wealth nor power had he;
Wisdom and worth were all he had,
But these were all to me.

XXX.

" And when, beside me in the dale,
He carol'd lays of love,
His breath lent fragrance to the gale,
And music to the grove.

XXXI.

" The blossom opening to the day,
The dews of Heaven refin'd,
Could nought of purity display
To emulate his mind.

XXXII.

" The dew, the blossom on the tree,
With charms inconstant shine;
Their charms were his, but wo to me,
Their constancy was mine.

XXXIII.

" For still I tried each fickle art,
Importunate and vain;
And while his passion touch'd my heart,
I triumph'd in his pain:

XXXIV.

" Till quite dejected with my scorn,
He left me to my pride;
And sought a solitude forlorn,
In secret, where he died.

XXXV.

" But mine the sorrow, mine the fault,
And well my life shall pay;
I'll seek the solitude he sought,
And stretch me where he lay.

XXXVI.

" And there forlorn, despairing, hid,
I'll lay me down and die;
'Twas so for me that Edwin did,
And so for him will I."

XXXVII.

" Forbid it, Heaven!" the Hermit cried,
And clasp'd her to his breast:
The wondering fair one turn'd to chide—
'Twas Edwin's self that prest.

XXXVIII.

" Turn, Angelina, ever dear,
My charmer, turn to see
Thy own, thy long-lost Edwin here,
Restor'd to love and thee.

XXXIX.

" Thus let me hold thee to my heart,
And every care resign:
And shall we never, never part,
My life—my all that's mine?

XL.

" No, never from this hour to part,
We'll live and love so true;
The sigh that rends thy constant heart,
Shall break thy Edwin's too."

AN

ELEGY

ON THE

DEATH OF A MAD DOG.*

Good people all, of every sort,
Give ear unto my song,
And if you find it wondrous short,
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man,
Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran,
Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,
To comfort friends and foes;
The naked every day he clad,
When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found,
As many dogs there be,
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends;
But when a pique began,
The dog, to gain some private ends,
Went mad, and bit the man.

* This, and the following poem, appeared in The Vicar of Wakefield, which was published in the year 1765.

Around from all the neighbouring streets
The wondering neighbours ran,
And swore the dog had lost his wits,
To bite so good a man.

The wound it seem'd both sore and sad
To every Christian eye;
And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
That shew'd the rogues they lied;
The man recover'd of the bite,
The dog it was that died.

STANZAS

ON

WOMAN.

When lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can sooth her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom—is to die.

THE

TRAVELLER,

OR,

A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY;

A POEM.

FIRST PRINTED IN MDCCLXV.

TO THE

REV. HENRY GOLDSMITH.

Dear Sir,

I am sensible that the friendship between us can acquire no new force from the ceremonies of a dedication; and perhaps it demands an excuse thus to prefix your name to my attempts, which you decline giving with your own. But as a part of this poem was formerly written to you from Switzerland, the whole can now, with propriety, be only inscribed to you. It will also throw a light upon many parts of it, when the reader understands, that it is addressed to a man, who, despising fame and fortune, has retired early to happiness and obscurity, with an income of forty pounds a-year.

I now perceive, my dear brother, the wisdom of your humble choice. You have entered upon a sacred office, where the harvest is great, and the labourers are but few; while you have left the field of ambition, where the labourers are many, and the harvest not worth carrying away. But of all kinds of ambition, what from the refinement of the times, from different systems of criticism, and from the divisions of party, that which pursues poetical fame is the wildest.

Poetry makes a principal amusement among unpolished nations; but in a country verging to the extremes of refinement, painting and music come in for a share. As these offer the feeble mind a less laborious entertainment, they at first rival poetry, and at length supplant her; they engross all that favour once shown to her, and though but younger sisters, seize upon the elder's birth-right.

Yet, however this art may be neglected by the powerful, it is still in great danger from the mistaken efforts of the learned to improve it. What

criticisms have we not heard of late in favour of blank verse, and Pindaric odes, chorusses, anapests and iambics, alliterative care and happy negligence! Every absurdity has now a champion to defend it; and as he is generally much in the wrong, so he has always much to say; for error is ever talkative.

But there is an enemy to this art still more dangerous, I mean party. Party entirely distorts the judgment, and destroys the taste. When the mind is once infected with this disease, it can only find pleasure in what contributes to increase the distemper. Like the tiger, that seldom desists from pursuing man, after having once preyed upon human flesh, the reader, who has once gratified his appetite with calumny, makes, ever after, the most agreeable feast upon murdered reputation. Such readers generally admire some half-witted thing, who wants to be thought a bold man, having lost the character of a wise one. Him they dignify with the name of poet: his tawdry lampoons are called satires; his turbulence is said to be force, and his phrenzy fire.

What reception a poem may find, which has neither abuse, party, nor blank verse to support it, I cannot tell, nor am I solicitous to know. My aims are right. Without espousing the cause of any party, I have attempted to moderate the rage of all. I have endeavoured to shew, that there may be equal happiness in states that are differently governed from our own; that every state has a particular principle of happiness, and that this principle in each may be carried to a mischievous excess. There are few can judge, better than yourself, how far these positions are illustrated in this poem. I am, dear Sir, your most affectionate brother,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

THE

TRAVELLER;

OR

A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY.†

Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow,
Or by the lazy Scheld, or wandering Po;
Or onward, where the rude Carinthian boor
Against the houseless stranger shuts the door;
Or where Campania's plain forsaken lies,
A weary waste expanding to the skies;
Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart untravell'd fondly turns to thee;
Still to my brother turns, with ceaseless pain,
And drags at each remove a lengthening chain.

Eternal blessings crown my earliest friend,
And round his dwelling guardian saints attend;
Blest be that spot, where cheerful guests retire
To pause from toil, and trim their evening fire:
Blest that abode, where want and pain repair,
And every stranger finds a ready chair:
Blest be those feasts with simple plenty crown'd,
Where all the ruddy family around
Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale;
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good.

† In this poem, as it passed through different editions, several alterations were made, and some additional verses introduced. We have followed the ninth edition, which was the last that appeared in the lifetime of the Author.

But me, not destin'd such delights to share,
My prime of life, in wandering spent, and care:
Impell'd, with steps unceasing, to pursue
Some fleeting good, that mocks me with the view;
That, like the circle bounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, yet, as I follow, flies;
My fortune leads to traverse realms alone,
And find no spot of all the world my own.

Ev'n now, where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend;
And plac'd on high above the storm's career,
Look downward where an hundred realms appear;
Lakes, forests, cities, plains, extending wide,
The pomp of kings, the shepherd's humbler pride.

When thus Creation's charms around combine,
Amidst the store should thankless pride repine?
Say, should the philosophic mind disdain
That good which makes each humbler bosom vain?
Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,
These little things are great to little man;
And wiser he, whose sympathetic mind
Exults in all the good of all mankind.
Ye glittering towns, with wealth and splendour crown'd;
Ye fields, where summer spreads profusion round;
Ye lakes, whose vessels catch the busy gale;
Ye bending swains, that dress the flowery vale;
For me your tributary stores combine:
Creation's heir, the world, the world is mine!

As some lone miser, visiting his store,
Bends at his treasure, counts, recounts it o'er,
Hoards after hoards his rising raptures fill,
Yet still he sighs, for hoards are wanting still:
Thus to my breast alternate passions rise,
Pleas'd with each good that Heaven to man supplies;

Yet oft a sigh prevails, and sorrows fall,
To see the hoard of human bliss so small;
And oft I wish, amidst the scene to find
Some spot to real happiness consign'd,
Where my worn soul, each wandering hope at rest,
May gather bliss to see my fellows blest.

But where to find that happiest spot below
Who can direct, when all pretend to know?
The shuddering tenant of the frigid zone
Boldly proclaims that happiest spot his own;
Extols the treasures of his stormy seas,
And his long nights of revelry and ease:
The naked negro, panting at the line,
Boasts of his golden sands and palmy wine,
Basks in the glare, or stems the tepid wave,
And thanks his gods for all the good they gave.
Such is the patriot's boast, where'er we roam,
His first, best country, ever is at home.
And yet, perhaps, if countries we compare,
And estimate the blessings which they share,
Though patriots flatter, still shall wisdom find
An equal portion dealt to all mankind;
As different good, by art or nature given,
To different nations makes their blessings even.

Nature, a mother kind alike to all,
Still grants her bliss at labour's earnest call;
With food as well the peasant is supplied
On Idra's cliffs as Arno's shelvy side;
And though the rocky crested summits frown,
These rocks, by custom, turn to beds of down.
From art more various are the blessings sent—
Wealth, commerce, honour, liberty, content.
Yet these each other's power so strong contest,
That either seems destructive of the rest.

Where wealth and freedom reign, contentment fails,
And honour sinks where commerce long prevails.
Hence every state to one lov'd blessing prone,
Conforms and models life to that alone.
Each to the favourite happiness attends,
And spurns the plan that aims at other ends;
Till carried to excess in each domain,
This favourite good begets peculiar pain.

But let us try these truths with closer eyes,
And trace them through the prospect as it lies:
Here for a while my proper cares resign'd,
Here let me sit in sorrow for mankind;
Like yon neglected shrub at random cast,
That shades the steep, and sighs at every blast.

Far to the right where Apennine ascends,
Bright as the summer, Italy extends;
Its uplands sloping, deck the mountain's side,
Woods over woods in gay theatric pride;
While oft some temple's mouldering tops between
With venerable grandeur mark the scene.

Could nature's bounty satisfy the breast,
The sons of Italy were surely blest.
Whatever fruits in different climes were found,
That proudly rise, or humbly court the ground;
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear,
Whose bright succession decks the varied year;
Whatever sweets salute the northern sky
With vernal lives, that blossom but to die;
These here disporting own the kindred soil,
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil;
While sea-born gales their gelid wings expand
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land.

But small the bliss that sense alone bestows,
And sensual bliss is all the nation knows.

In florid beauty groves and fields appear,
Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.
Contrasted faults through all his manners reign;
Though poor, luxurious; though submissive, vain;
Though grave, yet trifling; zealous, yet untrue;
And even in penance planning sins anew.
All evils here contaminate the mind,
That opulence departed leaves behind;
For wealth was theirs, not far remov'd the date,
When commerce proudly flourish'd thro' the state;
At her command the palace learn'd to rise,
Again the long-fall'n column sought the skies;
The canvass glow'd beyond e'en nature warm,
The pregnant quarry teem'd with human form:
Till, more unsteady than the southern gale,
Commerce on other shores display'd her sail;
While nought remain'd of all that riches gave,
But towns unmann'd, and lords without a slave:
And late the nation found with fruitless skill
Its former strength was but plethoric ill.

Yet, still the loss of wealth is here supplied
By arts, the splendid wrecks of former pride;
From these the feeble heart and long-fall'n mind
An easy compensation seem to find.
Here may be seen, in bloodless pomp array'd,
The pasteboard triumph and the cavalcade;
Processions formed for piety and love,
A mistress or a saint in every grove.
By sports like these are all their cares beguil'd,
The sports of children satisfy the child;
Each nobler aim, repress'd by long controul,
Now sinks at last, or feebly mans the soul;
While low delights succeeding fast behind,
In happier meanness occupy the mind:
As in those domes where Cæsars once bore sway,
Defac'd by time and tottering in decay,

There in the ruin, heedless of the dead,
The shelter-seeking peasant builds his shed:
And, wondering man could want the larger pile,
Exults, and owns his cottage with a smile.

My soul, turn from them; turn we to survey
Where rougher climes a nobler race display,
Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansion tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread;
No product here the barren hills afford,
But man and steel, the soldier and his sword.
No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,
But winter lingering chills the lap of May;
No zephyr fondly sues the mountain's breast,
But meteors glare, and stormy glooms invest.

Yet still, even here, content can spread a charm,
Redress the clime, and all its rage disarm.
Though poor the peasant's hut, his feast tho' small,
He sees his little lot the lot of all;
Sees no contiguous palace rear its head
To shame the meanness of his humble shed;
No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal
To make him loath his vegetable meal;
But calm, and bred in ignorance and toil,
Each wish contracting, fits him to the soil.
Cheerful at morn, he wakes from short repose,
Breathes the keen air, and carols as he goes;
With patient angle trolls the finny deep,
Or drives his vent'rous ploughshare to the steep;
Or seeks the den where snow-tracks mark the way,
And drags the struggling savage into day.
At night returning, every labour sped,
He sits him down the monarch of a shed;
Smiles by his cheerful fire, and round surveys
His children's looks, that brighten at the blaze;
While his lov'd partner, boastful of her hoard,
Displays her cleanly platter on the board:

And haply too some pilgrim, thither led,
With many a tale repays the nightly bed.

Thus every good his native wilds impart,
Imprints the patriot passion on his heart;
And e'en those ills that round his mansion rise,
Enhance the bliss his scanty fund supplies.
Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms;
And as a child, when scaring sounds molest,
Clings close and closer to the mother's breast,
So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
But binds him to his native mountains more.

Such are the charms to barren states assign'd;
Their wants but few, their wishes all confin'd.
Yet let them only share the praises due,
If few their wants, their pleasures are but few;
For every want that stimulates the breast,
Becomes a source of pleasure when redrest;
Whence from such lands each pleasing science flies,
That first excites desire, and then supplies;
Unknown to them, when sensual pleasures cloy,
To fill the languid pause with finer joy;
Unknown those powers that raise the soul to flame,
Catch every nerve, and vibrate through the frame.
Their level life is but a smouldering fire,
Unquench'd by want, unfann'd by strong desire;
Unfit for raptures, or, if raptures cheer
On some high festival of once a-year,
In wild excess the vulgar breast takes fire,
Till, buried in debauch, the bliss expire.

But not their joys alone thus coarsely flow;
Their morals, like their pleasures, are but low;
For, as refinement stops, from sire to son
Unalter'd, unimprov'd the manners run;

And love's and friendship's finely pointed dart
Fall blunted from each indurated heart.
Some sterner virtues o'er the mountain's breast
May sit like falcons cowering on the nest;
But all the gentler morals, such as play
Thro' life's more cultur'd walks, and charm the way;
These, far dispers'd, on timorous pinions fly,
To sport and flutter in a kinder sky.

To kinder skies, where gentler manners reign,
I turn; and France displays her bright domain.
Gay sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
Pleas'd with thyself, whom all the world can please,
How often have I led thy sportive choir,
With tuneless pipe beside the murmuring Loire!
Where shading elms along the margin grew,
And freshen'd from the wave the zephyr flew;
And haply, though my harsh touch falt'ring still,
But mock'd all tune, and marr'd the dancer's skill;
Yet would the village praise my wondrous power,
And dance, forgetful of the noon-tide hour.
Alike all ages. Dames of ancient days
Have led their children through the mirthful maze,
And the gay grandsire, skill'd in gestic lore,
Has frisk'd beneath the burden of threescore.

So blest a life these thoughtless realms display,
Thus idly busy rolls their world away:
Theirs are those arts that mind to mind endear,
For honour forms the social temper here.
Honour, that praise which real merit gains,
Or even imaginary worth obtains,
Here passes current; paid from hand to hand,
It shifts in splendid traffic round the land;
From courts, to camps, to cottages it strays,
And all are taught an avarice of praise;
They please, are pleas'd, they give to get esteem,
Till, seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.

But while this softer art their bliss supplies,
It gives their follies also room to rise;
For praise too dearly lov'd, or warmly sought,
Enfeebles all internal strength of thought:
And the weak soul, within itself unblest,
Leans for all pleasure on another's breast.
Hence ostentation here, with tawdry art,
Pants for the vulgar praise which fools impart;
Here vanity assumes her pert grimace,
And trims her robes of frieze with copper lace;
Here beggar pride defrauds her daily cheer,
To boast one splendid banquet once a-year;
The mind still turns where shifting fashion draws,
Nor weighs the solid worth of self-applause.

To men of other minds my fancy flies,
Embosom'd in the deep where Holland lies.
Methinks her patient sons before me stand,
Where the broad ocean leans against the land,
And, sedulous to stop the coming tide,
Lift the tall rampire's artificial pride.
Onward, methinks, and diligently slow,
The firm connected bulwark seems to grow;
Spreads its long arms amidst the watery roar,
Scoops out an empire, and usurps the shore.
While the pent ocean, rising o'er the pile,
Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile;
The slow canal, the yellow blossom'd vale,
The willow-tufted bank, the gliding sail,
The crowded mart, the cultivated plain,
A new creation rescued from his reign.

Thus, while around the wave-subjected soil
Impels the native to repeated toil,
Industrious habits in each bosom reign,
And industry begets a love of gain.
Hence all the good from opulence that springs,
With all those ills superfluous treasure brings,

Are here display'd. Their much lov'd wealth imparts
Convenience, plenty, elegance, and arts:
But view them closer, craft and fraud appear,
Even liberty itself is barter'd here.
At gold's superior charms all freedom flies,
The needy sell it, and the rich man buys;
A land of tyrants, and a den of slaves,
Her wretches seek dishonourable graves,
And calmly bent, to servitude conform,
Dull as their lakes that slumber in the storm.

Heavens! how unlike their Belgic sires of old!
Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold;
War in each breast, and freedom on each brow—
How much unlike the sons of Britain now!

Fir'd at the sound, my genius spreads her wing,
And flies where Britain courts the western spring;
Where lawns extend that scorn Arcadian pride,
And brighter streams than fam'd Hydaspes glide;
There all around the gentlest breezes stray,
There gentle music melts on every spray;
Creation's mildest charms are there combin'd,
Extremes are only in the master's mind!
Stern o'er each bosom reason holds her state
With daring aims irregularly great,
Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
I see the lords of human kind pass by;
Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band,
By forms unfashion'd, fresh from nature's hand,
Fierce in their native hardiness of soul,
True to imagin'd right, above controul,
While e'en the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
And learns to venerate himself as man.

Thine, Freedom, thine the blessings pictur'd here,
Thine are those charms that dazzle and endear;

Too blest indeed were such without alloy,
But foster'd e'en by freedom ills annoy;
That independence Britons prize too high,
Keeps man from man, and breaks the social tie;
The self-dependent lordlings stand alone,
All claims that bind and sweeten life unknown;
Here by the bonds of nature feebly held,
Minds combat minds, repelling and repell'd.
Ferments arise, imprison'd factions roar,
Represt ambition struggles round her shore,
Till over-wrought, the general system feels
Its motions stop, or phrenzy fire the wheels.

Nor this the worst. As nature's ties decay,
As duty, love, and honour fail to sway,
Fictitious bonds, the bonds of wealth and law,
Still gather strength, and force unwilling awe.
Hence all obedience bows to thee alone,
And talent sinks, and merit weeps unknown:
Till time may come, when, stript of all her charms,
The land of scholars, and the nurse of arms,
Where noble stems transmit the patriot flame,
Where kings have toil'd, and poets wrote for fame,
One sink of level avarice shall lie,
And scholars, soldiers, kings, unhonour'd die.

Yet think not thus, when Freedom's ills I state,
I mean to flatter kings, or court the great:
Ye powers of truth, that bid my soul aspire,
Far from my bosom drive the low desire;
And thou, fair Freedom, taught alike to feel
The rabble's rage, and tyrant's angry steel;
Thou transitory flower, alike undone
By proud contempt, or favour's fostering sun,
Still may thy blooms the changeful clime endure,
I only would repress them to secure:
For just experience tells, in every soil,
That those that think must govern those that toil;

And all that freedom's highest aims can reach,
Is but to lay proportion'd loads on each.
Hence, should one order disproportion'd grow,
Its double weight must ruin all below.

O then how blind to all that truth requires,
Who think it freedom when a part aspires!
Calm is my soul, nor apt to rise in arms,
Except when fast approaching danger warms:
But when contending chiefs blockade the throne,
Contracting regal power to stretch their own;
When I behold a factious band agree
To call it freedom when themselves are free;
Each wanton judge new penal statutes draw,
Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law;
The wealth of climes, where savage nations roam,
Pillag'd from slaves to purchase slaves at home;
Fear, pity, justice, indignation start,
Tear off reserve, and bare my swelling heart;
Till half a patriot, half a coward grown,
I fly from petty tyrants to the throne.

Yes, brother, curse with me that baleful hour,
When first ambition struck at regal power;
And thus polluting honour in its source,
Gave wealth to sway the mind with double force.
Have we not seen, round Britain's peopled shore,
Her useful sons exchang'd for useless ore?
Seen all her triumphs but destruction haste,
Like flaring tapers brightening as they waste?
Seen opulence, her grandeur to maintain,
Lead stern depopulation in her train,
And over fields where scattered hamlets rose,
In barren solitary pomp repose?
Have we not seen at pleasure's lordly call,
The smiling long frequented village fall?
Beheld the duteous son, the sire decay'd,
The modest matron, and the blushing maid,

Forc'd from their homes a melancholy train,
To traverse climes beyond the western main;
Where wild Oswego spreads her swamps around,
And Niagara stuns with thundering sound?

E'en now, perhaps, as there some pilgrim strays
Through tangled forests, and through dangerous ways;
Where beasts with man divided empire claim,
And the brown Indian marks with murderous aim;
There, while above the giddy tempest flies,
And all around distressful yells arise,
The pensive exile, bending with his woe,
To stop too fearful, and too faint to go,
Casts a long look where England's glories shine,
And bids his bosom sympathize with mine.

Vain, very vain, my weary search to find
That bliss which only centres in the mind:
Why have I stray'd from pleasure and repose,
To seek a good each government bestows?
In every government, though terrors reign,
Though tyrant kings, or tyrant laws restrain,
How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure.
Still to ourselves in every place consign'd,
Our own felicity we make or find:
With secret course, which no loud storms annoy,
Glides the smooth current of domestic joy.
The lifted axe, the agonizing wheel,
Luke's iron crown, and Damien's bed of steel,
To men remote from power but rarely known,
Leave reason, faith, and conscience, all our own.

THE

DESERTED VILLAGE;

A POEM.

FIRST PRINTED IN MDCCLXIX.

TO

DR GOLDSMITH,

AUTHOR OF

THE DESERTED VILLAGE.

BY MISS AIKIN,

AFTERWARDS MRS BARBAULD.

In vain fair Auburn weeps her desert plains;
She moves our envy who so well complains:
In vain hath proud oppression laid her low,
She wears a garland on her faded brow.
Now, Auburn, now, absolve impartial Fate,
Which if it makes thee wretched, makes thee great.
So unobserv'd, some humble plant may bloom,
Till crush'd it fills the air with sweet perfume:
So had thy swains in ease and plenty slept,
The poet had not sung, nor Britain wept.
Nor let Britannia mourn her drooping bay,
Unhonour'd Genius, and her swift decay;
O, patron of the poor! it cannot be,
While one—one poet yet remains like thee.
Nor can the Muse desert our favour'd isle,
Till thou desert the Muse, and scorn her smile.

TO

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

Dear Sir,

I can have no expectations, in an address of this kind, either to add to your reputation, or to establish my own. You can gain nothing from my admiration, as I am ignorant of that art in which you are said to excel; and I may lose much by the severity of your judgment, as few have a juster taste in poetry than you. Setting interest therefore aside, to which I never paid much attention, I must be indulged at present in following my affections. The only dedication I ever made was to my brother, because I loved him better than most other men. He is since dead. Permit me to inscribe this Poem to you.

How far you may be pleased with the versification and mere mechanical parts of this attempt, I do not pretend to inquire; but I know you will object (and indeed several of our best and wisest friends concur in the opinion), that the depopulation it deplores is no where to be seen, and the disorders it laments are only to be found in the poet's own imagination. To this I can scarcely make any other answer than that I sincerely believe what I have written; that I have taken all possible pains, in my country excursions, for these four or five years past, to be certain of what I allege; and that all my views and inquiries have led me to believe those miseries real, which I here attempt to dis-

play. But this is not the place to enter into an inquiry, whether the country be depopulating or not; the discussion would take up much room, and I should prove myself, at best, an indifferent politician, to tire the reader with a long preface, when I want his unfatigued attention to a long poem.

In regretting the depopulation of the country, I inveigh against the increase of our luxuries; and here also I expect the shout of modern politicians against me. For twenty or thirty years past, it has been the fashion to consider luxury as one of the greatest national advantages; and all the wisdom of antiquity in that particular, as erroneous. Still, however, I must remain a professed ancient on that head, and continue to think those luxuries prejudicial to states by which so many vices are introduced, and so many kingdoms have been undone. Indeed, so much has been poured out of late on the other side of the question, that merely for the sake of novelty and variety, one would sometimes wish to be in the right. I am, dear Sir, your sincere friend, and ardent admirer,

Oliver Goldsmith.

THE

DESERTED VILLAGE.

SWEET AUBURN! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheer'd the labouring swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delay'd:
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,
How often have I loiter'd o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endear'd each scene;
How often have I paus'd on every charm,
The shelter'd cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topt the neighbouring hill,
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made!
How often have I blest the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labour free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree;
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old survey'd;
And many a gambol frolick'd o'er the ground,
And slights of art and feats of strength went round;
And still as each repeated pleasure tir'd,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspir'd;
The dancing pair that simply sought renown,
By holding out to tire each other down;

The swain, mistrustless of his smutted face,
While secret laughter titter'd round the place;
The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love,
The matron's glance that would those looks reprove.
These were thy charms, sweet village! sports like these,
With sweet succession, taught e'en toil to please;
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed,
These were thy charms—but all these charms are fled.

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green:
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain;
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But choak'd with sedges, works its weedy way;
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow sounding bittern guards its nest;
Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries.
Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall;
And, trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away thy children leave the land.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay:
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroy'd, can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintain'd its man;

For him light labour spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life requir'd, but gave no more:
His best companions, innocence and health,
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are alter'd; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain:
Along the lawn, where scatter'd hamlets rose,
Unwieldy wealth, and cumbrous pomp repose;
And every want to luxury allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.
Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
Those calm desires that ask'd but little room,
Those healthful sports that grac'd the peaceful scene,
Liv'd in each look, and brighten'd all the green;
These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet Auburn, parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds,
Amidst thy tangling walks, and ruin'd grounds,
And, many a year elaps'd, return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs—and God has given my share—
I still had hopes my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose:
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amidst the swains to show my book-learn'd skill,
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw;

And, as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first he flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return—and die at home at last.

O blest retirement, friend to life's decline,
Retreats from care, that never must be mine,
How blest is he who crowns, in shades like these,
A youth of labour with an age of ease;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep;
Nor surly porter stands in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate:
But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend;
Sinks to the grave with unperceiv'd decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way;
And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past.

Sweet was the sound, when oft, at evening's close,
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose;
There, as I past with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came soften'd from below;
The swain responsive as the milk-maid sung,
The sober herd that low'd to meet their young;
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school;
The watch-dog's voice that bay'd the whispering wind,
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind;
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And fill'd each pause the nightingale had made.
But now the sounds of population fail,
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,

No busy steps the grass-grown foot-way tread,
But all the bloomy flush of life is fled:
All but yon widow'd, solitary thing,
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron, forc'd in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
To pick her wintry faggot from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn;
She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smil'd,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild;
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a-year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had chang'd, nor wish'd to change his place;
Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power,
By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize,
More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train,
He chid their wanderings, but reliev'd their pain;
The long remember'd beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruin'd spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claim'd kindred there, and had his claims allow'd;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talk'd the night away;
Wept o'er his wounds, or tales of sorrow done,
Shoulder'd his crutch, and shew'd how fields were won.
Pleas'd with his guests, the good man learn'd to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits, or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings lean'd to virtue's side;
But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watch'd and wept, he pray'd and felt for all;
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries,
To tempt its new-fledg'd offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reprov'd each dull delay,
Allur'd to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismay'd,
The reverend champion stood. At his controul,
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whisper'd praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorn'd the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remain'd to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;
E'en children follow'd with endearing wile,
And pluck'd his gown, to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth exprest,
Their welfare pleas'd him, and their care distrest;
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Tho' round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossom'd furze unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,
The village master taught his little school:

A man severe he was, and stern to view,
I knew him well, and every truant knew;
Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laugh'd with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper circling round,
Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frown'd:
Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault;
The village all declar'd how much he knew,
'Twas certain he could write, and cypher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And e'en the story ran—that he could guage:
In arguing too, the parson own'd his skill,
For e'en though vanquish'd, he could argue still;
While words of learned length, and thund'ring sound,
Amaz'd the gazing rustics rang'd around,—
And still they gaz'd, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew.

But past is all his fame. The very spot
Where many a time he triumph'd, is forgot.—
Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,
Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspir'd,
Where grey-beard mirth, and smiling toil retir'd,
Where village statesmen talk'd with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlour splendours of that festive place;
The white-wash'd wall, the nicely sanded floor,
The varnish'd clock that click'd behind the door;
The chest contriv'd a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
The pictures plac'd for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose;

The hearth, except when winter chill'd the day,
With aspin boughs, and flowers and fennel gay,
While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for shew,
Rang'd o'er the chimney, glisten'd in a row.

Vain transitory splendours! could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall?
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart;
Thither no more the peasant shall repair,
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be prest,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train,
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art:
Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway;
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfin'd.
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth array'd,
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain:
And e'en while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrusting asks, if this be joy?

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,

'Tis your's to judge, how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
And shouting folly hails them from her shore;
Hoards, e'en beyond the miser's wish abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around.
Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
Takes up a space that many poor supplied;
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage and hounds:
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth,
Has robb'd the neighbouring fields of half their growth;
His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
Indignant spurns the cottage from the green;
Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies.
While thus the land adorn'd for pleasure, all
In barren splendour feebly waits the fall.

As some fair female, unadorn'd and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
Slights every borrow'd charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes;
But when those charms are past, for charms are frail,
When time advances, and when lovers fail,
She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
In all the glaring impotence of dress.
Thus fares the land, by luxury betray'd;
In nature's simplest charms at first array'd,
But verging to decline, its splendours rise,
Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise;
While, scourg'd by famine from the smiling land,
The mournful peasant leads his humble band;
And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
The country blooms—a garden and a grave.

Where then, ah! where shall poverty reside,
To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride?
If to some common's fenceless limits stray'd,
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
And even the bare-worn common is denied.

If to the city sped—What waits him there?
To see profusion that he must not share;
To see ten thousand baneful arts combin'd
To pamper luxury, and thin mankind;
To see each joy the sons of pleasure know
Extorted from his fellow-creature's woe.
Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade,
There the pale artist plies the sickly trade;
Here, while the proud their long drawn pomps display,
There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.
The dome where pleasure holds her midnight reign,
Here, richly deck'd, admits the gorgeous train;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy!
Sure these denote one universal joy!
Are these thy serious thoughts—Ah, turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless shivering female lies.
She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,
Has wept at tales of innocence distrest;
Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn,
Now lost to all; her friends, her virtue fled,
Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,
And pinch'd with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour,
When idly first, ambitious of the town,
She left her wheel and robes of country brown.

Do thine, sweet AUBURN, thine, the loveliest train,
Do thy fair tribes participate her pain?
E'en now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
At proud men's doors they ask a little bread!

Ah, no. To distant climes, a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,
Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.
Far different there from all that charm'd before,
The various terrors of that horrid shore;
Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
And fiercely shed intolerable day;
Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
Those poisonous fields with rank luxuriance crown'd,
Where the dark scorpion gathers death around;
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake;
Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
And savage men more murderous still than they;
While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravag'd landscape with the skies.
Far different these from every former scene,
The cooling brook, the grassy vested green,
The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only shelter'd thefts of harmless love.

Good Heaven! what sorrows gloom'd that parting day
That call'd them from their native walks away;
When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,
Hung round the bowers, and fondly look'd their last,
And took a long farewell, and wish'd in vain
For seats like these beyond the western main;
And shuddering still to face the distant deep,
Return'd and wept, and still return'd to weep!

The good old sire, the first prepar'd to go
To new-found worlds, and wept for others' woe;
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wish'd for worlds beyond the grave.
His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for her father's arms.
With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
And blest the cot where every pleasure rose;
And kiss'd her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
And claspt them close, in sorrow doubly dear;
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.

O luxury! thou curst by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchang'd are things like these for thee!
How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse thy pleasures only to destroy!
Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigour not their own:
At every draught more large and large they grow
A bloated mass of rank unwieldy woe;
Till sapp'd their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.

E'en now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done;
E'en now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,
I see the rural virtues leave the land.
Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail,
That idly waiting flaps with every gale,
Downward they move, a melancholy band,
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
Contented toil, and hospitable care,
And kind connubial tenderness, are there;
And piety with wishes plac'd above,
And steady loyalty, and faithful love.

And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
Unfit in these degenerate times of shame,
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame;
Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride.
Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
Thou guide, by which the nobler arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!
Farewell, and O! where'er thy voice be tried,
On Torno's cliffs, or Pambamarca's side,
Whether where equinoctial fervours glow,
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
Redress the rigours of th' inclement clime;
Aid slighted truth with thy persuasive strain;
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain;
Teach him, that states of native strength possest,
Though very poor, may still be very blest;
That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
As ocean sweeps the labour'd mole away;
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

THE GIFT.

TO IRIS,

IN BOW-STREET, COVENT-GARDEN.

Say, cruel Iris, pretty rake,
  Dear mercenary beauty,
What annual offering shall I make
  Expressive of my duty?

My heart, a victim to thine eyes,
  Should I at once deliver,
Say, would the angry fair-one prize
  The gift, who slights the giver?

A bill, a jewel, watch, or toy,
  My rivals give—and let 'em;
If gems, or gold, impart a joy,
  I'll give them—when I get 'em.

I'll give—but not the full-blown rose,
  Or rose-bud more in fashion:
Such short-liv'd offerings but disclose
  A transitory passion.

I'll give thee something yet unpaid,
  Not less sincere, than civil:
I'll give thee—ah! too charming maid,
  I'll give thee—to the devil.

EPITAPH ON DR PARNELL.

This tomb, inscrib'd to gentle Parnell's name,
May speak our gratitude, but not his fame.
What art but feels his sweetly moral lay,
That leads to truth through pleasure's flowery way!
Celestial themes confess'd his tuneful aid;
And Heaven, that lent him genius, was repaid.
Needless to him the tribute we bestow,
The transitory breath of fame below:
More lasting rapture from his works shall rise,
While converts thank their poet in the skies.

EPILOGUE

TO THE

COMEDY OF THE SISTERS.

What? five long acts—and all to make us wiser?
Our authoress sure has wanted an adviser.
Had she consulted me, she should have made
Her moral play a speaking masquerade;
Warm'd up each bustling scene, and in her rage
Have emptied all the green-room on the stage.
My life on't, this had kept her play from sinking;
Have pleas'd our eyes, and sav'd the pain of thinking.
Well, since she thus has shewn her want of skill,
What if I give a masquerade?—I will.
But how? ay, there's the rub! [*pausing*]—I've got my cue;
The world's a masquerade! the masquers, you, you, you. [*To Boxes, Pit, and Gallery.*
Lud! what a group the motley scene discloses!
False wits, false wives, false virgins, and false spouses!
Statesmen with bridles on; and close beside 'em,
Patriots in party-colour'd suits that ride 'em.
There Hebes, turn'd of fifty, try once more
To raise a flame in Cupids of threescore:
These in their turn, with appetites as keen,
Deserting fifty, fasten on fifteen.
Miss, not yet full fifteen, with fire uncommon,
Flings down her sampler, and takes up the woman;

The little urchin smiles, and spreads her lure,
And trys to kill, ere she's got power to cure:
Thus 'tis with all—their chief and constant care
Is to seem every thing—but what they are.
Yon broad, bold, angry spark, I fix my eye on,
Who seems t' have robb'd his vizor from the lion;
Who frowns, and talks, and swears, with round parade,
Looking, as who should say, dam'me! who's afraid?
[*Mimicking.*
Strip but this vizor off, and sure I am
You'll find his lionship a very lamb.
Yon politician, famous in debate,
Perhaps, to vulgar eyes, bestrides the state;
Yet, when he deigns his real shape t' assume,
He turns old woman, and bestrides a broom.
Yon patriot, too, who presses on your sight,
And seems, to every gazer, all in white;
If with a bribe his candour you attack,
He bows, turns round, and whip—the man in black!
Yon critic, too—but whither do I run?
If I proceed, our bard will be undone!
Well then a truce, since she requests it too:
Do you spare her, and I'll for once spare you.

EPILOGUE,

SPOKEN BY

MRS BULKLEY AND MISS CATLEY.

Enter Mrs Bulkley, who courtesies very low as beginning to speak. Then enter Miss Catley, who stands full before her, and courtesies to the Audience.

Mrs Bulkley.

Hold, Ma'am, your pardon. What's your business here ?

Miss Catley.

The Epilogue.

Mrs Bulkley.

The Epilogue ?

Miss Catley.

Yes, the Epilogue, my dear.

Mrs Bulkley.

Sure you mistake, Ma'am. The Epilogue, *I* bring it.

Miss Catley.

Excuse me, Ma'am. The Author bid *me* sing it.

RECITATIVE.

Ye beaux and belles, that form this splendid ring,
Suspend your conversation while I sing.

Mrs Bulkley.

Why, sure the girl's beside herself! an Epilogue of singing,
A hopeful end indeed to such a blest beginning.
Besides, a singer in a comic set—
Excuse me, Ma'am, I know the etiquette.

Miss Catley.

What if we leave it to the house?

Mrs Bulkley.

The house!—Agreed.

Miss Catley.

Agreed.

Mrs Bulkley.

And she whose party's largest shall proceed.
And first, I hope you'll readily agree
I've all the critics and the wits for me.
They, I am sure, will answer my commands,
Ye candid judging few, hold up your hands:
What! no return? I find too late, I fear,
That modern judges seldom enter here.

Miss Catley.

I'm for a different set.—Old men whose trade is
Still to gallant and dangle with the ladies.

RECITATIVE.

Who mump their passion, and who, grimly smiling,
Still thus address the fair with voice beguiling.

Air.—*Cotillon.*

Turn my fairest, turn, if ever
Strephon caught thy ravish'd eye,
Pity take on your swain so clever,
Who without your aid must die.
Yes, I shall die, hu, hu, hu, hu,
Yes, I must die, ho, ho, ho, ho.
Da Capo.

Mrs Bulkley.

Let all the old pay homage to your merit;
Give me the young, the gay, the men of spirit.
Ye travell'd tribe, ye macaroni train,
Of French frisseurs and nosegays justly vain,
Who take a trip to Paris once a-year
To dress, and look like awkward Frenchmen here;
Lend me your hands.—O fatal news to tell,
Their hands are only lent to the Heinelle.

Miss Catley.

Ay, take your travellers—travellers indeed!
Give me my bonny Scot, that travels from the Tweed.
Where are the chiels? Ah! Ah, I well discern
The smiling looks of each bewitching bairn.

Air.—*A bonny young Lad is my Jockey.*

I'll sing to amuse you by night and by day,
And be unco merry when you are but gay;
When you with your bagpipes are ready to play,
My voice shall be ready to carol away
With Sandy, and Sawney, and Jockey,
With Sawney, and Jarvie, and Jockey.

Mrs Bulkley.

Ye Gamesters, who so eager in pursuit,
Make but of all your fourtune one *va toute :*
Ye Jockey tribe, whose stock of words are few,
"I hold the odds.—Done, done, with you, with you."
Ye barristers, so fluent with grimace,
"My Lord,—Your Lordship misconceives the case."
Doctors, who cough and answer every misfortuner,
I wish I'd been call'd in a little sooner :
Assist my cause with hands and voices hearty,
Come end the contest here, and aid my party.

Air.—*Ballinamony.*

Miss Catley.

Ye brave Irish lads, hark away to the crack,
Assist me, I pray, in this woful attack ;
For sure I don't wrong you, you seldom are slack,
When the ladies are calling, to blush and hang back.
For you're always polite and attentive,
Still to amuse us inventive,
And death is your only preventive :
Your hands and your voices for me.

Mrs Bulkley.

Well, Madam, what if, after all this sparring,
We both agree, like friends, to end our jarring ?

Miss Catley.

And that our friendship may remain unbroken,
What if we leave the Epilogue unspoken ?

Mrs Bulkley.

Agreed.

Miss Catley.

Agreed.

Mrs Bulkley.

And now with late repentance,
Un-epilogued the Poet waits his sentence.
Condemn the stubborn fool who can't submit
To thrive by flattery, though he starves by wit.

[*Exeunt.*

AN

EPILOGUE,

INTENDED

FOR MRS BULKLEY.

THERE is a place, so Ariosto sings,
A treasury for lost and missing things:
Lost human wits have places there assign'd them,
And they who lose their senses, there may find them.
But where's this place, this storehouse of the age?
The Moon, says he;—but I affirm, the Stage:
At least in many things, I think, I see
His lunar, and our mimic world agree.
Both shine at night, for, but at Foote's alone,
We scarce exhibit till the sun goes down.
Both prone to change, no settled limits fix,
And sure the folks of both are lunatics.
But in this parallel my best pretence is,
That mortals visit both to find their senses;
To this strange spot, Rakes, Macaronies, Cits,
Come thronging to collect their scatter'd wits.
The gay coquette, who ogles all the day,
Comes here at night, and goes a prude away.
Hither the affected city dame advancing,
Who sighs for Operas, and doats on dancing,
Taught by our art, her ridicule to pause on,
Quits the *Ballet*, and calls for Nancy Dawson.
The Gamester too, whose wit's all high or low,
Oft risks his fortune on one desperate throw,

Comes here to saunter, having made his bets,
Finds his lost senses out, and pays his debts.
The Mohawk too—with angry phrases stor'd,
As " Dam'me, Sir," and " Sir, I wear a sword ;"
Here lesson'd for a while, and hence retreating,
Goes out, affronts his man, and takes a beating.
Here come the sons of scandal and of news,
But find no sense—for they had none to lose.
Of all the tribe here wanting an adviser,
Our Author's the least likely to grow wiser ;
Has he not seen how you your favour place
On sentimental Queens and Lords in lace ?
Without a star, a coronet, or garter,
How can the piece expect or hope for quarter ?
No high-life scenes, no sentiment :—the creature
Still stoops among the low to copy nature.
Yes, he's far gone :—and yet some pity fix,
The English laws forbid to punish lunatics.*

* This Epilogue was given in MS. by Dr Goldsmith to Dr Percy, (now Bishop of Dromore) ; but for what comedy it was intended is not remembered.

THE

HAUNCH OF VENISON;

A

POETICAL EPISTLE

TO

LORD CLARE.

FIRST PRINTED IN MDCCLXV.

THE

HAUNCH OF VENISON;

A

POETICAL EPISTLE

TO

LORD CLARE.

THANKS, my lord, for your venison, for finer or fatter
Never rang'd in a forest, or smok'd in a platter.
The haunch was a picture for painters to study,
The fat was so white, and the lean was so ruddy;
Though my stomach was sharp, I could scarce help regretting
To spoil such a delicate picture by eating:
I had thoughts, in my chambers to place it in view,
To be shown to my friends as a piece of virtû;
As in some Irish houses, where things are so so,
One gammon of bacon hangs up for a show;
But for eating a rasher of what they take pride in,
They'd as soon think of eating the pan it is fried in.
But hold—let me pause—don't I hear you pronounce,
This tale of the bacon's a damnable bounce?
Well, suppose it a bounce—sure a poet may try,
By a bounce now and then, to get courage to fly.

But, my lord, it's no bounce: I protest in my turn,
It's a truth—and your lordship may ask Mr Burn.*
To go on with my tale—as I gaz'd on the haunch,
I thought of a friend that was trusty and staunch,
So I cut it, and sent it to Reynolds undrest,
To paint it, or eat it, just as he lik'd best.
Of the neck and the breast I had next to dispose:
'Twas a neck and a breast that might rival Monroe's:
But in parting with these I was puzzled again,
With the how, and the who, and the where, and the when.
There's H—d, and C—y, and H—rth, and H—ff,
I think they love venison—I know they love beef.
There's my countryman, Higgins—Oh! let him alone
For making a blunder, or picking a bone.
But hang it—to poets who seldom can eat,
Your very good mutton's a very good treat;
Such dainties to them their health it might hurt,
It's like sending them ruffles, when wanting a shirt.
While thus I debated, in reverie center'd,
An acquaintance, a friend, as he call'd himself, enter'd;
An under-bred, fine spoken fellow was he,
And he smil'd as he look'd at the venison and me.
"What have we got here?—Why this is good eating!
Your own, I suppose—or is it in waiting?"
"Why whose should it be?" cried I with a flounce,
"I get these things often"—but that was a bounce:
"Some lords, my acquaintance, that settle the nation,
Are pleas'd to be kind—but I hate ostentation."

"If that be the case then," cried he, very gay,
"I'm glad I have taken this house in my way.

* Lord Clare's nephew.

To-morrow you take a poor dinner with me;
No words—I insist on't—precisely at *three;*
We'll have Johnson, and Burke, all the wits will be there;
My acquaintance is slight, or I'd ask my lord Clare.
And, now that I think on't, as I am a sinner!
We wanted this venison to make out a dinner.
What say you—a pasty? it shall, and it must,
And my wife, little Kitty, is famous for crust.
Here, porter—this venison with me to Mile-end:
No stirring—I beg—my dear friend—my dear friend!"
Thus snatching his hat, he brush'd off like the wind,
And the porter and eatables follow'd behind.

Left alone to reflect, having emptied my shelf,
And "nobody with me at sea but myself;"*
Tho' I could not help thinking my gentleman hasty,
Yet Johnson and Burke, and a good venison pasty,
Were things that I never dislik'd in my life,
Tho' clogg'd with a coxcomb, and Kitty his wife.
So next day in due splendour to make my approach,
I drove to his door in my own hackney-coach.
When come to the place where we all were to dine;
(A chair lumber'd closet, just twelve feet by nine:)
My friend bade me welcome, but struck me quite dumb,
With tidings that Johnson and Burke would not come;
"For I knew it," he cried, "both eternally fail,
The one with his speeches, and t'other with Thrale;
But no matter, I'll warrant we'll make up the party
With two full as clever, and ten times as hearty.
The one is a Scotchman, the other a Jew,
They both of them merry, and authors like you:

* See the letters that passed between his Royal Highness Henry Duke of Cumberland, and Lady Grosvenor.—12mo, 1769.

The one writes the Snarler, the other the Scourge;
Some thinks he writes Cinna—he owns to Panurge:
While thus he describ'd them by trade and by name,
They enter'd, and dinner was serv'd as they came.

At the top, a fried liver and bacon were seen,
At the bottom was tripe in a swingeing tureen;
At the sides there was spinnage, and pudding made hot;
In the middle a place where the pasty—was not.
Now, my lord, as for tripe, it's my utter aversion,
And your bacon I hate like a Turk or a Persian;
So there I sat stuck like a horse in a pond,
While the bacon and liver went merrily round:
But what vex'd me most was that d——'d Scottish rogue,
With his long-winded speeches, his smiles and his brogue,
And "Madam," quoth he, "may this bit be my poison,
A prettier dinner I never set eyes on:
Pray a slice of your liver, though may I be curst,
But I've eat of your tripe till I'm ready to burst."
"The tripe," quoth the Jew, with his chocolate cheek,
"I could dine on this tripe seven days in a week:
I like these here dinners, so pretty and small;
But your friend there, the doctor, eats nothing at all."
"O—ho!" quoth my friend, "he'll come on in a trice,
He's keeping a corner for something that's nice;
There's a pasty"—"A pasty!" repeated the Jew,
"I don't care if I keep a corner for't too."
"What the de'il, mon, a pasty!" re-echoed the Scot,
"Tho' splitting, I'll still keep a corner for that."

" We'll all keep a corner," the lady cried out;
" We'll all keep a corner," was echoed about.
While thus we resolv'd, and the pasty delay'd,
With looks that quite petrified, enter'd the maid:
A visage so sad, and so pale with affright,
Wak'd Priam in drawing his curtains by night.
But we quickly found out, for who could mistake her?
That she came with some terrible news from the baker:
And so it fell out, for that negligent sloven
Had shut out the pasty on shutting his oven.
Sad Philomel thus—but let similes drop—
And now that I think on't, the story may stop.
To be plain, my good Lord, it's but labour misplac'd
To send such good verses to one of your taste;
You've got an odd something—a kind of discerning,
A relish—a taste—sicken'd over by learning;
At least, it's your temper, as very well known,
That you think very slightly of all that's your own:
So, perhaps, in your habits of thinking amiss,
You may make a mistake, and think slightly of this.

FROM

THE ORATORIO

OF

THE CAPTIVITY.

SONG.

The wretch condemn'd with life to part,
Still, still on hope relies;
And every pang that rends the heart,
Bids expectation rise.

Hope, like the glimmering taper's light,
Adorns and cheers the way;
And still, as darker grows the night,
Emits a brighter ray.

SONG.

O MEMORY! thou fond deceiver,
Still importunate and vain,
To former joys recurring ever,
And turning all the past to pain:

Thou, like the world, the opprest oppressing,
Thy smiles increase the wretch's woe;
And he who wants each other blessing,
In thee must ever find a foe.

THE

CLOWN'S REPLY.

John Trott was desir'd by two witty peers,
To tell them the reason why asses had ears;
"An't please you," quoth John, "I'm not given to letters,
Nor dare I pretend to know more than my betters,
Howe'er from this time I shall ne'er see your graces,
As I hope to be sav'd! without thinking on asses."

Edinburgh, 1753.

EPITAPH

ON

EDWARD PURDON.*

Here lies poor Ned Purdon, from misery freed,
Who long was a bookseller's hack;
He led such a damnable life in this world,
I don't think he'll wish to come back.

* This gentleman was educated at Trinity College, Dublin; but having wasted his patrimony, he inlisted as a foot soldier. Growing tired of that employment, he obtained his discharge, and became a scribbler in the Newspapers. He translated Voltaire's Henriade.

AN

ELEGY

ON

THE GLORY OF HER SEX,

Mrs MARY BLAIZE.

Good people all, with one accord,
Lament for Madam Blaize,
Who never wanted a good word,—
From those who spoke her praise.

The needy seldom pass'd her door,
And always found her kind;
She freely lent to all the poor,—
Who left a pledge behind.

She strove the neighbourhood to please
With manners wondrous winning;
And never follow'd wicked ways,—
Unless when she was sinning.

At church, in silks and satins new,
With hoop of monstrous size;
She never slumber'd in her pew,—
But when she shut her eyes.

Her love was sought, I do aver,
By twenty beaux and more;
The king himself has follow'd her,—
When she has walk'd before.

But now her wealth and finery fled,
Her hangers-on cut short all;
The doctors found, when she was dead,—
Her last disorder mortal.

Let us lament, in sorrow sore,
For Kent-street well may say,
That had she liv'd a twelvemonth more,—
She had not died to-day.

RETALIATION;

A

POEM.

FIRST PRINTED IN MDCCLXXIV,

AFTER THE AUTHOR'S DEATH.

Dr Goldsmith and some of his friends occasionally dined at the St James's Coffee-House.—One day it was proposed to write epitaphs on him. His country, dialect, and person, furnished subjects of witticism. He was called on for RETALIATION, and at their next meeting produced the following poem.

RETALIATION;

A

POEM.

Of old, when Scarron his companions invited,
Each guest brought his dish, and the feast was united;
If our * landlord supplies us with beef, and with fish,
Let each guest bring himself, and he brings the best dish:
Our † Dean shall be venison, just fresh from the plains:
Our ‡ Burke shall be tongue, with the garnish of brains:
Our § Will shall be wild-fowl, of excellent flavour,
And ‖ Dick with his pepper shall heighten the savour:
Our ¶ Cumberland's sweet-bread its place shall obtain,
And ** Douglas is pudding, substantial and plain:

* The master of the St James's Coffee-house, where the doctor, and the friends he has characterized in this poem, occasionally dined.

† Doctor Bernard, dean of Derry, in Ireland.

‡ The Right Hon. Edmund Burke.

§ Mr William Burke, late secretary to General Conway, and member for Bedwin.

‖ Mr Richard Burke, collector of Granada.

¶ Mr Richard Cumberland, author of the West Indian, Fashionable Lover, the Brothers, and various other productions *(a)*.

** Dr Douglas, canon of Windsor, (now bishop of Salisbury) an ingenious Scotch gentleman, who has no less distinguished himself as a citizen of the world, than a sound critic, in detecting several literary mistakes (or rather forgeries) of his countrymen; particularly Lauder on Milton, and Bower's History of the Popes.

(a) Since this note was written, of "Calvary, or the Death of Christ."

Our * Garrick's a sallad; for in him we see
Oil, vinegar, sugar, and saltness agree:
To make out the dinner, full certain I am,
That † Ridge is anchovy, and ‡ Reynolds is lamb;
That § Hickey's a capon, and by the same rule,
Magnanimous Goldsmith, a gooseberry fool.
At a dinner so various, at such a repast,
Who'd not be a glutton, and stick to the last?
Here, waiter, more wine, let me sit while I'm able,
Till all my companions sink under the table;
Then, with chaos and blunders encircling my head,
Let me ponder, and tell what I think of the dead.

Here lies the good || Dean, re-united to earth,
Who mix'd reason with pleasure, and wisdom with mirth:
If he had any faults, he has left us in doubt,
At least in six weeks I could not find 'em out;
Yet some have declar'd, and it can't be denied 'em,
That sly-boots was cursedly cunning to hide 'em.

Here lies our good ¶ Edmund, whose genius was such,
We scarcely can praise it, or blame it too much;
Who, born for the universe, narrow'd his mind,
And to party gave up what was meant for mankind.
Though fraught with all learning, yet straining his throat,
To persuade ** Tommy Townshend to lend him a vote;

* David Garrick, Esq.
† Counsellor John Ridge, a gentleman belonging to the Irish bar.
‡ Sir Joshua Reynolds.
§ An eminent attorney.
|| Vide page 89.
¶ Vide page 89.
** Mr T. Townshend, member for Whitchurch.

Who, too deep for his hearers, still went on refining,
And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining:
Though equal to all things, for all things unfit,
Too nice for a statesman, too proud for a wit;
For a patriot, too cool; for a drudge, disobedient,
And too fond of the *right* to pursue the *expedient.*
In short, 'twas his fate, unemploy'd or in place, sir,
To eat mutton cold, and cut blocks with a razor.

Here lies honest * William, whose heart was a mint,
While the owner ne'er knew half the good that was in't;
The pupil of impulse, it forc'd him along,
His conduct still right, with his argument wrong;
Still aiming at honour, yet fearing to roam,
The coachman was tipsy, the chariot drove home:
Would you ask for his merits? alas! he had none;
What was good was spontaneous, his faults were his own.

Here lies honest Richard, whose fate I must sigh at;
Alas, that such frolic should now be so quiet!
What spirits were his! what wit and what whim!
† Now breaking a jest, and now breaking a limb!
Now wrangling and grumbling to keep up the ball!
Now teasing and vexing, yet laughing at all!
In short, so provoking a devil was Dick,
That we wish'd him full ten times a-day at old Nick;
But missing his mirth and agreeable vein,
As often we wish'd to have Dick back again.

* Vide page 89.

† Mr Richard Burke; vide page 89. This gentleman having slightly fractured one of his arms and legs at different times, the doctor has rallied him on these accidents, as a kind of retributive justice for breaking his jests upon other people.

Here Cumberland lies, having acted his parts,
The Terence of England, the mender of hearts;
A flattering painter, who made it his care
To draw men as they ought to be, not as they are.
His gallants are all faultless, his women divine,
And comedy wonders at being so fine;
Like a tragedy queen he has dizen'd her out,
Or rather like tragedy giving a rout.
His fools have their follies so lost in a crowd
Of virtues and feelings, that folly grows proud,
And coxcombs, alike in their failings alone,
Adopting his portraits, are pleas'd with their own:
Say, where has our poet this malady caught,
Or, wherefore his characters thus without fault?
Say, was it that vainly directing his view
To find out men's virtues, and finding them few,
Quite sick of pursuing each troublesome elf,
He grew lazy at last, and drew from himself?

Here Douglas retires from his toils to relax,
The scourge of impostors, the terror of quacks:
Come all ye quack bards, and ye quacking divines,
Come, and dance on the spot where your tyrant reclines:
When satire and censure encircled his throne,
I fear'd for your safety, I fear'd for my own;
But now he is gone, and we want a detector,
Our * Dodds shall be pious, our † Kenricks shall lecture;
‡ Macpherson write bombast, and call it a style,
Our Townshend make speeches, and I shall compile;

* The Rev. Dr Dodd.

† Dr Kenrick, who read lectures at the Devil Tavern, under the title of "The School of Shakspeare."

‡ James Macpherson, Esq. who lately, from the mere force of his style, wrote down the first poet of all antiquity.

New Lauders and Bowers the Tweed shall cross over,
No countryman living their tricks to discover;
Detection her taper shall quench to a spark,
And Scotchman meet Scotchman, and cheat in the dark.

Here lies David Garrick, describe me who can,
An abridgment of all that was pleasant in man;
As an actor, confest without rival to shine;
As a wit, if not first, in the very first line:
Yet, with talents like these, and an excellent heart,
The man had his failings, a dupe to his art.
Like an ill-judging beauty, his colours he spread,
And beplaster'd with rouge his own natural red.
On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting;
'Twas only that when he was off, he was acting.
With no reason on earth to go out of his way,
He turn'd and he varied full ten times a-day:
Though secure of our hearts, yet confoundedly sick
If they were not his own by finessing and trick:
He cast off his friends, as a huntsman his pack,
For he knew when he pleas'd he could whistle them back.
Of praise a mere glutton, he swallow'd what came,
And the puff of a dunce, he mistook it for fame;
Till his relish, grown callous almost to disease,
Who pepper'd the highest, was surest to please.
But let us be candid, and speak out our mind,
If dunces applauded, he paid them in kind.
Ye Kenricks, ye * Kellys, and † Woodfalls so grave,
What a commerce was yours, while you got and you gave!

* Mr Hugh Kelly, author of False Delicacy, Word to the Wise, Clementina, School for Wives, &c. &c.

† Mr William Woodfall, printer of the Morning Chronicle.

How did Grub-street re-echo the shouts that you rais'd,
While he was be-Roscius'd, and you were be-prais'd!
But peace to his spirit wherever it flies,
To act as an angel and mix with the skies:
Those poets, who owe their best fame to his skill,
Shall still be his flatterers, go where he will,
Old Shakspeare receive him with praise and with love,
And Beaumonts and Bens be his Kellys above.‡

‡ The following poems by Mr Garrick, may in some measure account for the severity exercised by Dr Goldsmith in respect to that gentleman.

JUPITER AND MERCURY, A FABLE.

Here *Hermes*, says *Jove*, who with nectar was mellow,
Go fetch me some clay—I will make an *odd fellow!*
Right and wrong shall be jumbled,—much gold and some dross;
Without cause be he pleas'd, without cause be he cross;
Be sure, as I work, to throw in contradictions,
A great love of truth, yet a mind turn'd to fictions;
Now mix these ingredients, which, warm'd in the baking,
Turn'd to *learning* and *gaming*, *religion* and *raking*.
With the love of a wench, let his writings be chaste;
Tip his tongue with strange matter, his pen with fine taste;
That the rake and the poet o'er all may prevail,
Set fire to the head, and set fire to the tail;
For the joy of each sex, on the world I'll bestow it,
This *scholar*, *rake*, *Christian*, *dupe*, *gamester*, and *poet*,
Though a mixture so odd, he shall merit great fame,
And among brother mortals—be GOLDSMITH his name;
When on earth this strange meteor no more shall appear,
You, *Hermes*, shall fetch him—to make us sport here.

ON DR GOLDSMITH'S CHARACTERISTICAL COOKERY.

A JEU D'ESPRIT.

Are these the choice dishes the Doctor has sent us?
Is this the great poet whose works so content us?
This Goldsmith's fine feast, who has written fine books?
Heaven sends us good *meat*, but the *Devil sends cooks*.

Here Hickey reclines, a most blunt pleasant creature,
And slander itself must allow him good-nature;
He cherish'd his friend, and he relish'd a bumper,
Yet one fault he had, and that one was a thumper.
Perhaps you may ask if the man was a miser?
I answer no, no, for he always was wiser.
Too courteous, perhaps, or obligingly flat?
His very worst foe can't accuse him of that.
Perhaps he confided in men as they go,
And so was too foolishly honest? ah, no!
Then what was his failing? come tell it, and burn ye,
He was, could he help it? a special attorney.

Here Reynolds is laid, and to tell you my mind,
He has not left a wiser or better behind;
His pencil was striking, resistless, and grand;
His manners were gentle, complying, and bland:
Still born to improve us in every part,
His pencil our faces, his manners our heart:
To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering,
When they judg'd without skill, he was still hard of hearing:
When they talk'd of their Raphaels, Corregios, and stuff,
He shifted his * trumpet, and only took snuff.

* Sir Joshua Reynolds was so remarkably deaf, as to be under the necessity of using an ear-trumpet in company.

POSTSCRIPT.

After the fourth edition of this Poem was printed, the publisher received the following epitaph on Mr Whitefoord,* from a friend of the late Doctor Goldsmith.

Here Whitefoord reclines, and deny it who can,
Though he merrily liv'd, he is now a† grave man:
Rare compound of oddity, frolic, and fun!
Who relish'd a joke, and rejoic'd in a pun;
Whose temper was generous, open, sincere;
A stranger to flatt'ry, a stranger to fear;
Who scatter'd around wit and humour at will;
Whose daily *bon mots* half a column might fill:
A Scotchman, from pride and from prejudice free;
A scholar, yet surely no pedant was he.

What pity, alas! that so lib'ral a mind
Should so long be to newspaper essays confin'd!
Who perhaps to the summit of science could soar,
Yet content "if the table he set in a roar;"
Whose talents to fill any station were fit,
Yet happy if Woodfall‡ confess'd him a wit.

Ye newspaper witlings! ye pert scribbling folks!
Who copied his squibs, and re-echo'd his jokes;

* Mr Caleb Whitefoord, author of many humorous essays.

† Mr W. was so notorious a punster, that Dr Goldsmith used to say it was impossible to keep him company, without being infected with the itch of punning.

‡ Mr H. S. Woodfall, printer of the Public Advertiser.

Ye tame imitators, ye servile herd, come,
Still follow your master, and visit his tomb:
To deck it, bring with you festoons of the vine,
And copious libations bestow on his shrine;
Then strew all around it (you can do no less)
* *Cross-readings, ship-news,* and *mistakes of the press.*

Merry Whitefoord, farewell! for thy sake I admit
That a Scot may have humour, I had almost said wit.
This debt to thy mem'ry I cannot refuse,
"Thou best humour'd man with the worst humour'd Muse."

* Mr Whitefoord has frequently indulged the town with humorous pieces under those titles in the Public Advertiser.

SONG:

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN SUNG IN THE COMEDY OF "SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER."*

Ah me! when shall I marry me?
Lovers are plenty; but fail to relieve me.
He, fond youth, that could carry me,
Offers to love, but means to deceive me.

But I will rally, and combat the ruiner:
Not a look, nor a smile shall my passion discover.
She that gives all to the false one pursuing her,
Makes but a penitent, and loses a lover.

* Sir,—I send you a small production of the late Dr Goldsmith, which has never been published, and which might perhaps have been totally lost, had I not secured it. He intended it as a song in the character of Miss Hardcastle, in his admirable comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer," but it was left out, as Mrs Bulkley, who played the part, did not sing. He sung it himself in private companies very agreeably. The tune is a pretty Irish air, called "The Humours of Balamagairy," to which, he told me, he found it very difficult to adapt words; but he has succeeded very happily in these few lines. As I could sing the tune, and was fond of them, he was so good as to give me them, about a year ago, just as I was leaving London, and bidding him adieu for that season, little apprehending that it was a last farewell. I preserve this little relic, in his own hand-writing, with an affectionate care.

I am, Sir,
Your humble servant,
James Boswell.

PROLOGUE

TO

ZOBEIDE;

A TRAGEDY:

WRITTEN BY

JOSEPH CRADDOCK, Esq.

ACTED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN,
MDCCLXXII.

SPOKEN BY MR QUICK.

In these bold times, when Learning's sons explore
The distant climates, and the savage shore;
When wise *astronomers* to India steer,
And quit for Venus many a brighter here;
While *botanists*, all cold to smiles and dimpling,
Forsake the fair, and patiently—go simpling;
Our bard into the general spirit enters,
And fits his little frigate for adventures.
With *Scythian* stores, and trinkets deeply laden,
He this way steers his course, in hopes of trading—
Yet ere he lands he's order'd me before,
To make an observation on the shore.
Where are we driven? our reckoning sure is lost!
This seems a rocky and a dangerous coast.
Lord, what a sultry climate am I under!
Yon ill foreboding cloud seems big with thunder:
[*Upper Gallery.*

There mangroves spread, and larger than I've seen 'em— [*Pit.*
Here trees of stately size—and billing turtles in 'em. [*Balconies.*
Here ill-condition'd oranges abound— [*Stage.*
And apples, bitter apples strew the ground:
[*Tasting them.*
The inhabitants are cannibals, I fear:
I heard a hissing—there are serpents here!
O, there the people are—best keep my distance:
Our Captain, gentle natives! craves assistance;
Our ship's well stor'd—in yonder creek we've laid her,
His honour is no mercenary trader.
This is his first adventure, lend him aid,
And we may chance to drive a thriving trade.
His goods, he hopes, are prime, and brought from far,
Equally fit for gallantry and war.
What, no reply to promises so ample?
I'd best step back—and order up a sample.

EPILOGUE

SPOKEN BY

Mr. LEE LEWES,

IN THE CHARACTER OF HARLEQUIN,

AT HIS BENEFIT.

Hold! Prompter, hold! a word before your nonsense:
I'd speak a word or two, to ease my conscience.
My pride forbids it ever should be said,
My heels eclips'd the honours of my head;
That I found humour in a pyeball vest,
Or ever thought that jumping was a jest.
[*Takes off his mask.*
Whence, and what art thou, visionary birth?
Nature disowns, and reason scorns thy mirth;
In thy black aspect every passion sleeps,
The joy that dimples, and the woe that weeps.
How hast thou fill'd the scene with all thy brood
Of fools pursuing, and of fools pursued!
Whose ins and outs no ray of sense discloses,
Whose only plot it is to break our noses;
Whilst from below the trap-door *demons* rise,
And from above the dangling deities;
And shall I mix in this unhallow'd crew?
May rosin'd lightning blast me if I do!
No—I will act, I'll vindicate the stage:
Shakspeare himself shall feel my tragic rage.

Off! off! vile trappings! a new passion reigns!
The madd'ning monarch revels in my veins.
Oh! for a Richard's voice to catch the theme:
Give me another horse! bind up my wounds!—
soft—'twas but a dream.
Ay, 'twas but a dream, for now there's no retreating,
If I cease Harlequin, I cease from eating.
'Twas thus that Æsop's stag, a creature blameless,
Yet something vain, like one that shall be nameless,
Once on the margin of a fountain stood,
And cavill'd at his image in the flood.
"The deuce confound," he cries, "these drumstick shanks,
They never have my gratitude nor thanks;
They're perfectly disgraceful! strike me dead!
But for a head, yes, yes, I have a head.
How piercing is that eye! how sleek that brow!
My horns! I'm told horns are the fashion now."
Whilst thus he spoke, astonish'd! to his view,
Near, and more near, the hounds and huntsmen drew;
Hoicks! hark forward! came thund'ring from behind,
He bounds aloft, outstrips the fleeting wind:
He quits the woods, and tries the beaten ways;
He starts, he pants, he takes the circling maze.
At length, his silly head, so priz'd before,
Is taught his former folly to deplore;
Whilst his strong limbs conspire to set him free,
And at one bound he saves himself, like me.

[*Taking a jump through the stage door.*

THE

LOGICIANS REFUTED.

IN

IMITATION OF DEAN SWIFT.

Logicians have but ill defin'd
As rational the human mind;
Reason, they say, belongs to man,
But let them prove it if they can.
Wise Aristotle and Smiglesius,
By ratiocinations specious,
Have strove to prove with great precision,
With definition and division,
Homo est ratione preditum;
But for my soul I cannot credit 'em;
And must in spite of them maintain,
That man and all his ways are vain;
And that this boasted lord of nature
Is both a weak and erring creature.
That instinct is a surer guide,
Than reason, boasting mortals' pride;
And that brute beasts are far before 'em,
Deus est anima brutorum.
Who ever knew an honest brute
At law his neighbour prosecute,
Bring action for assault and battery,
Or friend beguile with lies and flattery?
O'er plains they ramble unconfin'd,
No politics disturb their mind;

They eat their meals, and take their sport,
Nor know who's in or out at court;
They never to the levee go
To treat as dearest friend, a foe;
They never importune his Grace,
Nor ever cringe to men in place;
Nor undertake a dirty job,
Nor draw the quill to write for Bob:
Fraught with invective they ne'er go
To folks at Pater-Noster Row:
No judges, fiddlers, dancing-masters,
No pickpockets or poetasters,
Are known to honest quadrupeds,
No single brute his fellows leads.
Brutes never meet in bloody fray,
Nor cut each others' throats for pay.
Of beasts, it is confess'd, the ape
Comes nearest us in human shape,
Like man he imitates each fashion,
And malice is his ruling passion;
But both in malice and grimaces,
A courtier any ape surpasses.
Behold him humbly cringing wait
Upon the minister of state;
View him soon after to inferiors
Aping the conduct of superiors:
He promises with equal air,
And to perform takes equal care.
He in his turn finds imitators,
At court, the porters, lacqueys, waiters,
Their master's manners still contract,
And footmen, lords, and dukes can act.
Thus at the court, both great and small
Behave alike, for all ape all.

STANZAS

ON THE

TAKING OF QUEBEC.

Amidst the clamour of exulting joys,
Which triumph forces from the patriot heart,
Grief dares to mingle her soul-piercing voice,
And quells the raptures which from pleasure start.

O Wolfe, to thee a streaming flood of woe,
Sighing we pay, and think e'en conquest dear;
Quebec in vain shall teach our breast to glow,
Whilst thy sad fate extorts the heart-wrung tear.

Alive, the foe thy dreadful vigour fled,
And saw thee fall with joy-pronouncing eyes:
Yet they shall know thou conquerest, though dead!
Since from thy tomb a thousand heroes rise.

ON

A BEAUTIFUL YOUTH

STRUCK BLIND

BY LIGHTNING.

Sure 'twas by Providence design'd,
Rather in pity, than in hate,
That he should be, like Cupid, blind,
To save him from Narcissus' fate.

A SONNET.

WEEPING, murmuring, complaining,
  Lost to every gay delight;
Myra, too sincere for feigning,
  Fears th' approaching bridal night.

Yet why impair thy bright perfection?
  Or dim thy beauty with a tear?
Had Myra follow'd my direction,
  She long had wanted cause of fear.

THE

GOOD-NATUR'D MAN;

A

COMEDY:

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

FIRST PRINTED IN MDCCLXVIII.

PREFACE.

When I undertook to write a comedy, I confess I was strongly prepossessed in favour of the poets of the last age, and strove to imitate them. The term, genteel comedy, was then unknown amongst us, and little more was desired by an audience, than nature and humour, in whatever walks of life they were most conspicuous. The author of the following scenes never imagined that more would be expected of him, and therefore to delineate character has been his principal aim. Those who know any thing of composition, are sensible, that in pursuing humour, it will sometimes lead us into the recesses of the mean; I was even tempted to look for it in the master of a spunging-house; but in deference to the public taste, grown of late, perhaps, too delicate, the scene of the bailiffs was retrenched in the representation. In deference also to the judgment of a few friends, who think in a particular way, the scene is here restored. The author submits it to the reader in his closet; and hopes that too much refinement will not banish humour and character from ours, as it has already done from the French theatre. Indeed, the French comedy is now become so very elevated and sentimental, that it has not only banished humour and Moliere from the stage, but it has banished all spectators too.

Upon the whole, the author returns his thanks to the Public for the favourable reception which the Good-Natur'd Man has met with; and to Mr Colman in particular, for his kindness to it. It may not also be improper to assure any, who shall hereafter write for the theatre, that merit, or supposed merit, will ever be a sufficient passport to his protection.

PROLOGUE,

WRITTEN BY DR JOHNSON:

SPOKEN BY

MR BENSLEY.

Prest by the load of life, the weary mind
Surveys the general toil of human kind;
With cool submission joins the lab'ring train,
And social sorrow loses half its pain:
Our anxious bard, without complaint, may share
This bustling season's epidemic care,
Like Cæsar's pilot, dignified by fate,
Tost in one common storm with all the great;
Distrest alike, the statesman and the wit,
When one a borough courts, and one the pit.
The busy candidates for power and fame,
Have hopes, and fears, and wishes, just the same;
Disabled both to combat, or to fly,
Must hear all taunts, and hear without reply.
Uncheck'd, on both loud rabbles vent their rage,
As mongrels bay the lion in a cage.
Th' offended burgess hoards his angry tale,
For that blest year when all that vote may rail;
Their schemes of spite the poet's foes dismiss,
Till that glad night, when all that hate may hiss.

" This day the powder'd curls and golden coat,"
Says swelling Crispin, " begg'd a cobbler's vote."
" This night, our wit," the pert apprentice cries,
" Lies at my feet—I hiss him, and he dies."
The great, 'tis true, can charm the electing tribe;
The bard may supplicate, but cannot bribe.
Yet judg'd by those, whose voices ne'er were sold,
He feels no want of ill-persuading gold;
But confident of praise, if praise be due,
Trusts without fear, to merit, and to you.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Mr Honeywood	Mr Powell.
Croaker	Mr Shuter.
Lofty	Mr Woodward.
Sir William Honeywood	Mr Clarke.
Leontine	Mr Bensley.
Jarvis	Mr Dunstall.
Butler	Mr Cushing.
Bailiff	Mr R. Smith.
Dubardieu	Mr Holtam.
Postboy	Mr Quick.

WOMEN.

Miss Richland	Mrs Bulkley.
Olivia	Mrs Mattocks.
Mrs Croaker	Mrs Pitt.
Garnet	Mrs Green.
Landlady	Mrs White.

Scene, London.

THE

GOOD-NATUR'D MAN.

ACT FIRST.

Scene—An Apartment in Young Honeywood's *House.*

Enter Sir William Honeywood, Jarvis.

Sir William.

Good Jarvis, make no apologies for this honest bluntness. Fidelity, like yours, is the best excuse for every freedom.

Jarvis.

I can't help being blunt, and being very angry too, when I hear you talk of disinheriting so good, so worthy a young gentleman as your nephew, my master. All the world loves him.

Sir William.

Say rather, that he loves all the world; that is his fault.

Jarvis.

I am sure there is no part of it more dear to him than you are, though he has not seen you since he was a child.

Sir WILLIAM.

What signifies his affection to me; or how can I be proud of a place in a heart, where every sharper and coxcomb find an easy entrance?

JARVIS.

I grant you that he is rather too good-natur'd; that he's too much every man's man; that he laughs this minute with one, and cries the next with another: but whose instructions may he thank for all this?

Sir WILLIAM.

Not mine, sure? My letters to him during my employment in Italy, taught him only that philosophy which might prevent, not defend his errors.

JARVIS.

Faith, begging your honour's pardon, I'm sorry they taught him any philosophy at all; it has only served to spoil him. This same philosophy is a good horse in the stable, but an arrant jade on a journey. For my own part, whenever I hear him mention the name on't, I'm always sure he's going to play the fool.

Sir WILLIAM.

Don't let us ascribe his faults to his philosophy, I entreat you. No, Jarvis, his good-nature arises rather from his fears of offending the importunate, than his desire of making the deserving happy.

JARVIS.

What it arises from, I don't know. But to be sure, every body has it, that asks it.

Sir WILLIAM.

Ay, or that does not ask it. I have been now for some time a concealed spectator of his follies, and find them as boundless as his dissipation.

JARVIS.

And yet, faith, he has some fine name or other for them all. He calls his extravagance, generosity; and his trusting every body, universal benevolence. It was but last week he went security for a fellow whose face he scarce knew, and that he called an act of exalted mu—mu—munificence; ay, that was the name he gave it.

Sir WILLIAM.

And upon that I proceed, as my last effort, though with very little hopes to reclaim him. That very fellow has just absconded, and I have taken up the security. Now, my intention is to involve him in fictitious distress, before he has plunged himself into real calamity: To arrest him for that very debt, to clap an officer upon him, and then let him see which of his friends will come to his relief.

JARVIS.

Well, if I could but any way see him thoroughly vexed, every groan of his would be music to me; yet faith, I believe it impossible. I have tried to fret him myself every morning these three years; but instead of being angry, he sits as calmly to hear me scold, as he does to his hair-dresser.

Sir WILLIAM.

We must try him once more, however, and I'll go this instant to put my scheme into execution:

and I don't despair of succeeding, as, by your means, I can have frequent opportunities of being about him without being known. What a pity it is, Jarvis, that any man's good-will to others should produce so much neglect of himself, as to require correction? Yet we must touch his weaknesses with a delicate hand. There are some faults so nearly allied to excellence, that we can scarce weed out the vice without eradicating the virtue. [*Exit.*

JARVIS.

Well, go thy ways, Sir William Honeywood. It is not without reason, that the world allows thee to be the best of men. But here comes his hopeful nephew; the strange good-natur'd, foolish, open-hearted—And yet, all his faults are such that one loves him still the better for them.

Enter HONEYWOOD.

HONEYWOOD.

Well, Jarvis, what messages from my friends this morning?

JARVIS.

You have no friends.

HONEYWOOD.

Well; from my acquaintance then?

JARVIS.

(Pulling out bills.) A few of our usual cards of compliment, that's all. This bill from your tailor; this from your mercer; and this from the little broker in Crooked-lane. He says he has been at a great deal of trouble to get back the money you borrowed.

HONEYWOOD.

That I don't know; but I am sure we were at a great deal of trouble in getting him to lend it.

JARVIS.

He has lost all patience.

HONEYWOOD.

Then he has lost a very good thing.

JARVIS.

There's that ten guineas you were sending to the poor gentleman and his children in the Fleet. I believe that would stop his mouth for a while at least.

HONEYWOOD.

Ay, Jarvis, but what will fill their mouths in the mean time? Must I be cruel, because he happens to be importunate; and, to relieve his avarice, leave them to insupportable distress?

JARVIS.

'Sdeath! Sir, the question now is how to relieve yourself; yourself.—Haven't I reason to be out of my senses, when I see things going at sixes and sevens?

HONEYWOOD.

Whatever reason you may have for being out of your senses, I hope you'll allow that I'm not quite unreasonable for continuing in mine.

JARVIS.

You are the only man alive in your present situation that could do so.—Every thing upon the waste. There's Miss Richland and her fine fortune gone

already, and upon the point of being given to your rival.

HONEYWOOD.

I'm no man's rival.

JARVIS.

Your uncle in Italy preparing to disinherit you; your own fortune almost spent; and nothing but pressing creditors, false friends, and a pack of drunken servants that your kindness has made unfit for any other family.

HONEYWOOD.

Then they have the more occasion for being in mine.

JARVIS.

Soh! What will you have done with him that I caught stealing your plate in the pantry? In the fact; I caught him in the fact.

HONEYWOOD.

In the fact? If so, I really think that we should pay him his wages, and turn him off.

JARVIS.

He shall be turned off at Tyburn, the dog; we'll hang him, if it be only to frighten the rest of the family.

HONEYWOOD.

No, Jarvis; it's enough that we have lost what he has stolen; let us not add to it the loss of a fellow-creature!

JARVIS.

Very fine! well, here was the footman just now,

to complain of the butler: he says he does most work, and ought to have most wages.

HONEYWOOD.

That's but just; though perhaps here comes the butler to complain of the footman.

JARVIS.

Ay, it's the way with them all, from the scullion to the privy-counsellor. If they have a bad master, they keep quarrelling with him; if they have a good master, they keep quarrelling with one another.

Enter BUTLER, *drunk.*

BUTLER.

Sir, I'll not stay in the family with Jonathan; you must part with him, or part with me, that's the ex—ex—exposition of the matter, Sir.

HONEYWOOD.

Full and explicit enough. But what's his fault, good Philip?

BUTLER.

Sir, he's given to drinking, Sir, and I shall have my morals corrupted by keeping such company.

HONEYWOOD.

Ha! ha! he has such a diverting way—

JARVIS.

O, quite amusing.

BUTLER.

I find my wine's a-going, Sir; and liquors don't go without mouths, Sir; I hate a drunkard, Sir.

HONEYWOOD.

Well, well, Philip, I'll hear you upon that another time; so go to bed now.

JARVIS.

To bed! let him go to the devil.

BUTLER.

Begging your honour's pardon, and begging your pardon, master Jarvis, I'll not go to bed, nor to the devil neither. I have enough to do to mind my cellar. I forgot, your honour, Mr Croaker is below. I came on purpose to tell you.

HONEYWOOD.

Why didn't you show him up, blockhead?

BUTLER.

Shew him up, Sir! With all my heart, Sir. Up or down, all's one to me. [*Exit.*

JARVIS.

Ay, we have one or other of that family in this house from morning till night. He comes on the old affair, I suppose. The match between his son that's just returned from Paris, and Miss Richland, the young lady he's guardian to.

HONEYWOOD.

Perhaps so. Mr Croaker, knowing my friendship for the young lady, has got it into his head that I can persuade her to what I please.

JARVIS.

Ah! if you loved yourself but half as well as she loves you, we should soon see a marriage that would set all things to rights again.

HONEYWOOD.

Love me! Sure, Jarvis, you dream. No, no; her intimacy with me never amounted to more than friendship—mere friendship. That she is the most lovely woman that ever warmed the human heart with desire, I own. But never let me harbour a thought of making her unhappy, by a connexion with one so unworthy her merits as I am. No, Jarvis, it shall be my study to serve her, even in spite of my wishes; and to secure her happiness, though it destroys my own.

JARVIS.

Was ever the like? I want patience.

HONEYWOOD.

Besides, Jarvis, though I could obtain Miss Richland's consent, do you think I could succeed with her guardian, or Mrs Croaker, his wife; who, though both very fine in their way, are yet a little opposite in their dispositions, you know.

JARVIS.

Opposite enough, Heaven knows! the very reverse of each other: she all laugh and no joke; he always complaining and never sorrowful; a fretful poor soul, that has a new distress for every hour in the four-and-twenty—

HONEYWOOD.

Hush, hush, he's coming up, he'll hear you.

JARVIS.

One whose voice is a passing-bell—

HONEYWOOD.

Well, well; go, do.

JARVIS.

A raven that bodes nothing but mischief; a coffin and cross bones; a bundle of rue; a sprig of deadly nightshade; a— *(Honeywood stopping his mouth, at last pushes him off.)* [*Exit* Jarvis.

HONEYWOOD.

I must own my old monitor is not entirely wrong. There is something in my friend Croaker's conversation that quite depresses me. His very mirth is an antidote to all gaiety, and his appearance has a stronger effect on my spirits than an undertaker's shop.—Mr Croaker, this is such a satisfaction—

Enter CROAKER.

CROAKER.

A pleasant morning to Mr Honeywood, and many of them. How is this! you look most shockingly to-day, my dear friend. I hope this weather does not affect your spirits. To be sure, if this weather continues—I say nothing—But God send we be all better this day three months.

HONEYWOOD.

I heartily concur in the wish, though, I own, not in your apprehensions.

CROAKER.

May be not. Indeed, what signifies what weather we have in a country going to ruin like ours? taxes rising and trade falling. Money flying out of the kingdom, and Jesuits swarming into it. I know at this time no less than a hundred and twenty-seven Jesuits between Charing-cross and Temple-bar.

HONEYWOOD.

The Jesuits will scarce pervert you or me, I should hope.

CROAKER.

May be not. Indeed, what signifies whom they pervert in a country that has scarce any religion to lose? I'm only afraid for our wives and daughters.

HONEYWOOD.

I have no apprehensions for the ladies, I assure you.

CROAKER.

May be not. Indeed, what signifies whether they be perverted or no? the women in my time were good for something. I have seen a lady drest from top to toe in her own manufactures formerly. But now-a-days, the devil a thing of their own manufacture's about them, except their faces.

HONEYWOOD.

But, however these faults may be practised abroad, you don't find them at home, either with Mrs Croaker, Olivia, or Miss Richland?

CROAKER.

The best of them will never be canonized for a saint when she's dead. By the bye, my dear friend, I don't find this match between Miss Richland and my son much relished, either by one side or t'other.

HONEYWOOD.

I thought otherwise.

CROAKER.

Ah, Mr Honeywood, a little of your fine serious advice to the young lady might go far: I know she has a very exalted opinion of your understanding.

HONEYWOOD.

But would not that be usurping an authority that more properly belongs to yourself?

CROAKER.

My dear friend, you know but little of my authority at home. People think, indeed, because they see me come out in a morning thus, with a pleasant face, and to make my friends merry, that all's well within. But I have cares that would break an heart of stone. My wife has so encroached upon every one of my privileges, that I'm now no more than a mere lodger in my own house.

HONEYWOOD.

But a little spirit exerted on your side might perhaps restore your authority.

CROAKER.

No, though I had the spirit of a lion! I do rouse sometimes. But what then? always haggling and haggling. A man is tired of getting the better before his wife is tired of losing the victory.

HONEYWOOD.

It's a melancholy consideration indeed, that our chief comforts often produce our greatest anxieties, and that an increase of our possessions is but an inlet to new disquietudes.

CROAKER.

Ah, my dear friend, these were the very words of poor Dick Doleful to me not a week before he made away with himself. Indeed, Mr Honeywood, I never see you but you put me in mind of poor Dick. Ah, there was merit neglected for you! and so true a friend! we loved each other for thirty years, and yet he never asked me to lend him a single farthing.

HONEYWOOD.

Pray what could induce him to commit so rash an action at last?

CROAKER.

I don't know, some people were malicious enough to say it was keeping company with me; because we used to meet now and then and open our hearts to each other. To be sure I loved to hear him talk, and he loved to hear me talk; poor dear Dick. He used to say that Croaker rhymed to joker; and so we used to laugh—Poor Dick. [*Going to cry.*

HONEYWOOD.

His fate affects me.

CROAKER.

Ah, he grew sick of this miserable life, where we do nothing but eat and grow hungry, dress and undress, get up and lie down; while reason, that should watch like a nurse by our side, falls as fast asleep as we do.

HONEYWOOD.

To say a truth, if we compare that part of life which is to come, by that which we have past, the prospect is hideous.

CROAKER.

Life at the greatest and best is but a froward child, that must be humoured and coaxed a little till it falls asleep, and then all the care is over.

HONEYWOOD.

Very true, Sir, nothing can exceed the vanity of our existence, but the folly of our pursuits. We wept when we came into the world, and every day tells us why.

CROAKER.

Ah, my dear friend, it is a perfect satisfaction to be miserable with you. My son Leontine shan't lose the benefit of such fine conversation. I'll just step home for him. I am willing to show him so much seriousness in one scarce older than himself —And what if I bring my last letter to the Gazetteer on the increase and progress of earthquakes? It will amuse us, I promise you. I there prove how the late earthquake is coming round to pay us another visit, from London to Lisbon, from Lisbon to the Canary Islands, from the Canary Islands to Palmyra, from Palmyra to Constantinople, and so from Constantinople back to London again. [*Exit.*

HONEYWOOD.

Poor Croaker! his situation deserves the utmost pity. I shall scarce recover my spirits these three days. Sure to live upon such terms is worse than death itself. And yet, when I consider my own situation,—a broken fortune, a hopeless passion, friends in distress, the wish but not the power to serve them—*(pausing and sighing).*

Enter BUTLER.

BUTLER.

More company below, Sir; Mrs Croaker and Miss Richland; shall I shew them up? but they're shewing up themselves. [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs CROAKER *and* Miss RICHLAND.

Miss RICHLAND.

You're always in such spirits.

Mrs CROAKER.

We have just come, my dear Honeywood, from the auction. There was the old deaf dowager, as usual, bidding like a fury against herself. And then so curious in antiques! herself the most genuine piece of antiquity in the whole collection.

HONEYWOOD.

Excuse me, ladies, if some uneasiness from friendship makes me unfit to share in this good-humour: I know you'll pardon me.

Mrs CROAKER.

I vow he seems as melancholy as if he had taken a dose of my husband this morning. Well, if Richland here can pardon you, I must.

Miss RICHLAND.

You would seem to insinuate, Madam, that I have particular reasons for being disposed to refuse it.

Mrs CROAKER.

Whatever I insinuate, my dear, don't be so ready to wish an explanation.

Miss Richland.

I own I should be sorry Mr Honeywood's long friendship and mine should be misunderstood.

Honeywood.

There's no answering for others, Madam. But I hope you'll never find me presuming to offer more than the most delicate friendship may readily allow.

Miss Richland.

And I shall be prouder of such a tribute from you, than the most passionate professions from others.

Honeywood.

My own sentiments, Madam: friendship is a disinterested commerce between equals; love, an abject intercourse between tyrants and slaves.

Miss Richland.

And, without a compliment, I know none more disinterested, or more capable of friendship, than Mr Honeywood.

Mrs Croaker.

And, indeed, I know nobody that has more friends, at least among the ladies. Miss Fruzz, Miss Oddbody, and Miss Winterbottom, praise him in all companies. As for Miss Biddy Bundle, she's his professed admirer.

Miss Richland.

Indeed! an admirer!—I did not know, Sir, you were such a favourite there. But is she seriously so handsome? Is she the mighty thing talked of?

HONEYWOOD.

The town, Madam, seldom begins to praise a lady's beauty, till she's beginning to lose it.

(Smiling.)

Mrs CROAKER.

But she's resolved never to lose it, it seems. For, as her natural face decays, her skill improves in making the artificial one. Well, nothing diverts me more than one of those fine, old, dressy things, who thinks to conceal her age, by every-where exposing her person; sticking herself up in the front of a side box; trailing through a minuet at Almack's; and then, in the public gardens, looking for all the world like one of the painted ruins of the place.

HONEYWOOD.

Every age has its admirers, ladies. While you, perhaps, are trading among the warmer climates of youth, there ought to be some to carry on a useful commerce in the frozen latitudes beyond fifty.

Miss RICHLAND.

But, then, the mortifications they must suffer, before they can be fitted out for traffic. I have seen one of them fret a whole morning at her hair-dresser, when all the fault was her face.

HONEYWOOD.

And yet, I'll engage, has carried that face at last to a very good market. This good-natured town, Madam, has husbands, like spectacles, to fit every age, from fifteen to fourscore.

Mrs CROAKER.

Well, you're a dear good-natured creature. But

you know you're engaged with us this morning upon a strolling party. I want to shew Olivia the town, and the things; I believe I shall have business for you for the whole day.

HONEYWOOD.

I am sorry, Madam, I have an appointment with Mr Croaker, which it is impossible to put off.

MRS CROAKER.

What! with my husband? then I'm resolv'd to take no refusal. Nay, I protest you must. You know I never laugh so much as with you.

HONEYWOOD.

Why, if I must, I must. I'll swear you have put me into such spirits. Well, do you find jest, and I'll find laugh, I promise you. We'll wait for the chariot in the next room. [*Exeunt.*

Enter LEONTINE *and* OLIVIA.

LEONTINE.

There they go, thoughtless and happy. My dearest Olivia, what would I give to see you capable of sharing in their amusements, and as cheerful as they are.

OLIVIA.

How, my Leontine, how can I be cheerful, when I have so many terrors to oppress me? The fear of being detected by this family, and the apprehensions of a censuring world, when I must be detected—

LEONTINE.

The world, my love! what can it say? At worst it can only say, that, being compelled by a merce-

nary guardian to embrace a life you disliked, you formed a resolution of flying with the man of your choice; that you confided in his honour, and took refuge in my father's house; the only one where your's could remain without censure.

OLIVIA.

But consider, Leontine, your disobedience and my indiscretion; your being sent to France to bring home a sister, and, instead of a sister, bringing home——

LEONTINE.

One dearer than a thousand sisters. One that I am convinced will be equally dear to the rest of the family, when she comes to be known.

OLIVIA.

And that, I fear, will shortly be.

LEONTINE.

Impossible, till we ourselves think proper to make the discovery. My sister, you know, has been with her aunt, at Lyons, since she was a child, and you find every creature in the family takes you for her.

OLIVIA.

But mayn't she write, mayn't her aunt write?

LEONTINE.

Her aunt scarce ever writes, and all my sister's letters are directed to me.

OLIVIA.

But won't your refusing Miss Richland, for whom you know the old gentleman intends you, create a suspicion?

LEONTINE.

There, there's my master-stroke. I have resolved not to refuse her; nay, an hour hence I have consented to go with my father to make her an offer of my heart and fortune.

OLIVIA.

Your heart and fortune!

LEONTINE.

Don't be alarmed, my dearest. Can Olivia think so meanly of my honour, or my love, as to suppose I could ever hope for happiness from any but her? No, my Olivia, neither the force, nor, permit me to add, the delicacy of my passion, leave any room to suspect me. I only offer Miss Richland a heart I am convinced she will refuse; as I am confident, that, without knowing it, her affections are fixed upon Mr Honeywood.

OLIVIA.

Mr Honeywood! You'll excuse my apprehensions; but when your merits come to be put in the balance—

LEONTINE.

You view them with too much partiality. However, by making this offer, I shew a seeming compliance with my father's command; and perhaps, upon her refusal, I may have his consent to chuse for myself.

OLIVIA.

Well, I submit. And yet, my Leontine, I own, I shall envy her even your pretended addresses. I consider every look, every expression of your esteem, as due only to me. This is folly perhaps: I

allow it: but it is natural to suppose, that merit which has made an impression on one's own heart, may be powerful over that of another.

LEONTINE.

Don't, my life's treasure, don't let us make imaginary evils, when you know we have so many real ones to encounter. At worst, you know, if Miss Richland should consent, or my father refuse his pardon, it can but end in a trip to Scotland; and—

Enter CROAKER.

CROAKER.

Where have you been, boy? I have been seeking you. My friend Honeywood here has been saying such comfortable things. Ah! he's an example indeed. Where is he? I left him here.

LEONTINE.

Sir, I believe you may see him, and hear him too, in the next room; he's preparing to go out with the ladies.

CROAKER.

Good gracious! can I believe my eyes or my ears! I'm struck dumb with his vivacity, and stunned with the loudness of his laugh. Was there ever such a transformation! (*a laugh behind the scenes, Croaker mimics it.*) Ha! ha! ha! there it goes: a plague take their balderdash! yet I could expect nothing less, when my precious wife was of the party. On my conscience, I believe she could spread a horse-laugh through the pews of a tabernacle.

LEONTINE.

Since you find so many objections to a wife, Sir,

how can you be so earnest in recommending one to me?

CROAKER.

I have told you, and tell you again, boy, that Miss Richland's fortune must not go out of the family; one may find comfort in the money, whatever one does in the wife.

LEONTINE.

But, Sir, though, in obedience to your desire, I am ready to marry her, it may be possible she has no inclination to me.

CROAKER.

I'll tell you once for all how it stands. A good part of Miss Richland's large fortune consists in a claim upon government, which my good friend, Mr Lofty, assures me the treasury will allow. One-half of this she is to forfeit, by her father's will, in case she refuses to marry you. So, if she rejects you, we seize half her fortune; if she accepts you, we seize the whole, and a fine girl into the bargain.

LEONTINE.

But, Sir, if you will but listen to reason—

CROAKER.

Come, then, produce your reasons. I tell you, I'm fixed, determined; so now produce your reasons. When I'm determined, I always listen to reason, because it can then do no harm.

LEONTINE.

You have alleged that a mutual choice was the first requisite in matrimonial happiness.

CROAKER.

Well, and you have both of you a mutual choice. She has her choice—to marry you or lose half her fortune; and you have your choice—to marry her, or pack out of doors without any fortune at all.

LEONTINE.

An only son, Sir, might expect more indulgence.

CROAKER.

An only father, Sir, might expect more obedience: besides, has not your sister here, that never disobliged me in her life, as good a right as you? He's a sad dog, Livy, my dear, and would take all from you. But he shan't, I tell you he shan't, for you shall have your share.

OLIVIA.

Dear Sir, I wish you'd be convinced, that I can never be happy in any addition to my fortune, which is taken from his.

CROAKER.

Well, well, it's a good child, so say no more; but come with me, and we shall see something that will give us a great deal of pleasure, I promise you; old Ruggins, the curry-comb maker, lying in state: I am told he makes a very handsome corpse, and becomes his coffin prodigiously. He was an intimate friend of mine, and these are friendly things we ought to do for each other.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT SECOND.

Scene—Croaker's *House.*

Miss Richland, Garnet.

Miss Richland.

Olivia not his sister? Olivia not Leontine's sister? You amaze me!

Garnet.

No more his sister than I am; I had it all from his own servant: I can get any thing from that quarter.

Miss Richland.

But how? Tell me again, Garnet.

Garnet.

Why, Madam, as I told you before, instead of going to Lyons to bring home his sister, who has been there with her aunt these ten years, he never went further than Paris: there he saw and fell in love with this young lady, by the bye, of a prodigious family.

Miss Richland.

And brought her home to my guardian as his daughter?

Garnet.

Yes, and his daughter she will be. If he don't consent to their marriage, they talk of trying what a Scotch parson can do.

Miss Richland.

Well, I own they have deceived me—And so demurely as Olivia carried it too!—Would you believe it, Garnet, I told her all my secrets; and yet the sly cheat concealed all this from me?

Garnet.

And, upon my word, Madam, I don't much blame her: she was loth to trust one with her secrets, that was so very bad at keeping her own.

Miss Richland.

But, to add to their deceit, the young gentleman, it seems, pretends to make me serious proposals. My guardian and he are to be here presently, to open the affair in form. You know I am to lose half my fortune if I refuse him.

Garnet.

Yet, what can you do? For being, as you are, in love with Mr Honeywood, Madam—

Miss Richland.

How! Idiot, what do you mean? In love with Mr Honeywood! Is this to provoke me?

Garnet.

That is, Madam, in friendship with him; I

meant nothing more than friendship, as I hope to be married; nothing more.

Miss Richland.

Well, no more of this: As to my guardian and his son, they shall find me prepared to receive them: I'm resolved to accept their proposal with seeming pleasure, to mortify them by compliance, and so throw the refusal at last upon them.

Garnet.

Delicious! and that will secure your whole fortune to yourself. Well, who could have thought so innocent a face could cover so much 'cuteness!

Miss Richland.

Why, girl, I only oppose my prudence to their cunning, and practise a lesson they have taught me against themselves.

Garnet.

Then you're likely not long to want employment, for here they come, and in close conference.

Enter Croaker, Leontine.

Leontine.

Excuse me, Sir, if I seem to hesitate upon the point of putting to the lady so important a question.

Croaker.

Lord! good Sir, moderate your fears; you're so plaguy shy, that one would think you had changed sexes. I tell you we must have the half or the whole. Come, let me see with what spirit you begin: Well, why don't you? Eh! What? Well then—I must, it seems—Miss Richland, my dear,

I believe you guess at our business; an affair which my son here comes to open, that nearly concerns your happiness.

Miss Richland.

Sir, I should be ungrateful not to be pleased with any thing that comes recommended by you.

Croaker.

How, boy, could you desire a finer opening? Why don't you begin, I say? [*To Leontine.*

Leontine.

'Tis true, Madam, my father, Madam, has some intentions—hem—of explaining an affair—which—himself—can best explain, Madam.

Croaker.

Yes, my dear; it comes entirely from my son; it's all a request of his own, Madam. And I will permit him to make the best of it.

Leontine.

The whole affair is only this, Madam; my father has a proposal to make, which he insists none but himself shall deliver.

Croaker.

My mind misgives me, the fellow will never be brought on *(Aside)*. In short, Madam, you see before you one that loves you; one whose whole happiness is all in you.

Miss Richland.

I never had any doubts of your regard, Sir; and I hope you can have none of my duty.

CROAKER.

That's not the thing, my little sweeting; my love! No, no, another guess lover than I: there he stands, Madam, his very looks declare the force of his passion—Call up a look, you dog! *(Aside.)*—But then, had you seen him, as I have, weeping, speaking soliloquies and blank verse, sometimes melancholy, and sometimes absent—

MISS RICHLAND.

I fear, Sir, he's absent now; or such a declaration would have come most properly from himself.

CROAKER.

Himself! Madam, he would die before he could make such a confession; and if he had not a channel for his passion through me, it would ere now have drowned his understanding.

MISS RICHLAND.

I must grant, Sir, there are attractions in modest diffidence above the force of words. A silent address is the genuine eloquence of sincerity.

CROAKER.

Madam, he has forgot to speak any other language; silence is become his mother tongue.

MISS RICHLAND.

And it must be confessed, Sir, it speaks very powerfully in his favour. And yet I shall be thought too forward in making such a confession; shan't I, Mr Leontine?

LEONTINE.

Confusion! my reserve will undo me. But, if

modesty attracts her, impudence may disgust her. I'll try. *(Aside.)* Don't imagine from my silence, Madam, that I want a due sense of the honour and happiness intended me. My father, Madam, tells me, your humble servant is not totally indifferent to you—he admires you: I adore you; and when we come together, upon my soul I believe we shall be the happiest couple in all St James's.

Miss Richland.

If I could flatter myself you thought as you speak, Sir—

Leontine.

Doubt my sincerity, Madam? By your dear self I swear. Ask the brave if they desire glory? ask cowards if they covet safety——

Croaker.

Well, well, no more questions about it.

Leontine.

Ask the sick if they long for health? ask misers if they love money? ask——

Croaker.

Ask a fool if he can talk nonsense? What's come over the boy? What signifies asking, when there's not a soul to give you an answer? If you would ask to the purpose, ask this lady's consent to make you happy.

Miss Richland.

Why indeed, Sir, his uncommon ardour almost compels me—forces me to comply. And yet I'm afraid he'll despise a conquest gained with too much ease; won't you, Mr Leontine?

LEONTINE.

Confusion! *(Aside).* Oh, by no means, Madam, by no means. And yet, Madam, you talked of force. There is nothing I would avoid so much as compulsion in a thing of this kind. No, Madam, I will still be generous, and leave you at liberty to refuse.

CROAKER.

But I tell you, Sir, the lady is not at liberty. It's a match. You see she says nothing. Silence gives consent.

LEONTINE.

But, Sir, she talked of force. Consider, Sir, the cruelty of constraining her inclinations.

CROAKER.

But I say there's no cruelty. Don't you know, blockhead, that girls have always a roundabout way of saying yes before company? So get you both gone together into the next room, and hang him that interrupts the tender explanation. Get you gone, I say; I'll not hear a word.

LEONTINE.

But, Sir, I must beg leave to insist—

CROAKER.

Get off, you puppy, or I'll beg leave to insist upon knocking you down. Stupid whelp! But I don't wonder: the boy takes entirely after his mother.

[*Exeunt* Miss RICHLAND and LEONTINE.

Enter Mrs Croaker.

Mrs Croaker.

Mr Croaker, I bring you something, my dear, that I believe will make you smile.

Croaker.

I'll hold you a guinea of that, my dear.

Mrs Croaker.

A letter; and, as I knew the hand, I ventured to open it.

Croaker.

And how can you expect your breaking open my letters should give me pleasure?

Mrs Croaker.

Poo! it's from your sister at Lyons, and contains good news; read it.

Croaker.

What a Frenchified cover is here! That sister of mine has some good qualities, but I could never teach her to fold a letter.

Mrs Croaker.

Fold a fiddlestick. Read what it contains.

Croaker, (*reading*).

"Dear Nick,

An English gentleman, of large fortune, has for some time made private, though honourable proposals to your daughter Olivia. They love each other tenderly, and I find she has consented, without letting any of the family know, to crown his addresses. As such good offers don't come

every day, your own good sense, his large fortune, and family considerations, will induce you to forgive her.

Your's ever,
RACHAEL CROAKER."

My daughter Olivia privately contracted to a man of large fortune! This is good news, indeed. My heart never foretold me of this. And yet, how slily the little baggage has carried it since she came home; not a word on't to the old ones for the world. Yet I thought I saw something she wanted to conceal.

Mrs CROAKER.

Well, if they have concealed their amour, they shan't conceal their wedding; that shall be public, I'm resolved.

CROAKER.

I tell thee, woman, the wedding is the most foolish part of the ceremony. I can never get this woman to think of the most serious part of the nuptial engagement.

Mrs CROAKER.

What, would you have me think of their funeral? But come, tell me, my dear, don't you owe more to me than you care to confess? Would you have ever been known to Mr Lofty, who has undertaken Miss Richland's claim at the Treasury, but for me? Who was it first made him an acquaintance at Lady Shabbaroon's rout? Who got him to promise us his interest? Is not he a back-stairs favourite, one that can do what he pleases with those that do what they please? Is not he an acquaintance that all your groaning and lamentation could never have got us?

CROAKER.

He is a man of importance, I grant you. And yet what amazes me is, that, while he is giving away places to all the world, he can't get one for himself.

Mrs CROAKER.

That perhaps may be owing to his nicety. Great men are not easily satisfied.

Enter FRENCH SERVANT.

SERVANT.

An expresse from Monsieur Lofty. He vil be vait upon your honours instrammant. He be only giving four five instruction, read two tree memorial, call upon von ambassadeur. He vil be vid you in one tree minutes.

Mrs CROAKER.

You see now, my dear. What an extensive department! Well, friend, let your master know, that we are extremely honoured by this honour. Was there any thing ever in a higher style of breeding? All messages among the great are now done by express.

CROAKER.

To be sure, no man does little things with more solemnity, or claims more respect than he. But he's in the right on't. In our bad world, respect is given where respect is claimed.

Mrs CROAKER.

Never mind the world, my dear; you were never in a pleasanter place in your life. Let us now think of receiving him with proper respect, (*a loud rap-*

ping at the door), and there he is, by the thundering rap.

CROAKER.

Ay, verily, there he is! as close upon the heels of his own express, as an indorsement upon the back of a bill. Well, I'll leave you to receive him, whilst I go to chide my little Olivia for intending to steal a marriage without mine or her aunt's consent. I must seem to be angry, or she too may begin to despise my authority. [*Exit.*

Enter LOFTY, *speaking to his Servant.*

LOFTY.

" And if the Venetian ambassador, or that teazing creature the Marquis, should call, I'm not at home. Dam'me, I'll be pack-horse to none of them." My dear Madam, I have just snatched a moment—" And if the expresses to his Grace be ready, let them be sent off; they're of importance." —Madam, I ask a thousand pardons.

Mrs CROAKER.

Sir, this honour——

LOFTY.

" And, Dubardieu! if the person calls about the commission, let him know that it is made out. As for Lord Cumbercourt's stale request, it can keep cold: you understand me."—Madam, I ask ten thousand pardons.

Mrs CROAKER.

Sir, this honour——

LOFTY.

" And, Dubardieu! if the man comes from the

Cornish borough, you must do him; you must do him, I say."—Madam, I ask ten thousand pardons. —"And if the Russian ambassador calls; but he will scarce call to-day, I believe."—And now, Madam, I have just got time to express my happiness in having the honour of being permitted to profess myself your most obedient humble servant.

Mrs Croaker.

Sir, the happiness and honour are all mine; and yet, I'm only robbing the public while I detain you.

Lofty.

Sink the public, Madam, when the fair are to be attended. Ah, could all my hours be so charmingly devoted! Sincerely, don't you pity us poor creatures in affairs? Thus it is eternally; solicited for places here, teazed for pensions there, and courted every-where. I know you pity me. Yes, I see you do.

Mrs Croaker.

Excuse me, Sir, "Toils of empires pleasures are," as Waller says.

Lofty.

Waller, Waller, is he of the house?

Mrs Croaker.

The modern poet of that name, Sir.

Lofty.

Oh, a modern! we men of business despise the moderns; and as for the ancients, we have no time to read them. Poetry is a pretty thing enough for our wives and daughters; but not for us. Why

now, here I stand that know nothing of books. I say, Madam, I know nothing of books; and yet, I believe, upon a land-carriage fishery, a stamp act, or a jag-hire, I can talk my two hours without feeling the want of them.

Mrs Croaker.

The world is no stranger to Mr Lofty's eminence in every capacity.

Lofty.

I vow to gad, Madam, you make me blush. I'm nothing, nothing, nothing in the world; a mere obscure gentleman. To be sure, indeed, one or two of the present ministers are pleased to represent me as a formidable man. I know they are pleased to bespatter me at all their little dirty levees. Yet, upon my soul, I wonder what they see in me to treat me so! Measures, not men, have always been my mark; and I vow, by all that's honourable, my resentment has never done the men, as mere men, any manner of harm—that is as mere men.

Mrs Croaker.

What importance, and yet what modesty!

Lofty.

Oh, if you talk of modesty, Madam, there I own, I'm accessible to praise: modesty is my foible: it was so, the Duke of Brentford used to say of me. "I love Jack Lofty," he used to say: "no man has a finer knowledge of things; quite a man of information; and when he speaks upon his legs, by the Lord he's prodigious, he scouts them; and yet all men have their faults; too much modesty is his," says his Grace.

Mrs Croaker.

And yet, I dare say, you don't want assurance when you come to solicit for your friends.

Lofty.

O, there indeed I'm in bronze. Apropos! I have just been mentioning Miss Richland's case to a certain personage; we must name no names. When I ask, I'm not to be put off, Madam. No, no, I take my friend by the button. A fine girl, Sir; great justice in her case. A friend of mine. Borough interest. Business must be done, Mr Secretary. I say, Mr Secretary, her business must be done, Sir. That's my way, Madam.

Mrs Croaker.

Bless me! you said all this to the Secretary of State, did you?

Lofty.

I did not say the Secretary, did I? Well, curse it, since you have found me out, I will not deny it. It was to the Secretary.

Mrs Croaker.

This was going to the fountain-head at once, not applying to the understrappers, as Mr Honeywood would have had us.

Lofty.

Honeywood! he! he! He was, indeed, a fine solicitor. I suppose you have heard what has just happened to him?

Mrs Croaker.

Poor dear man; no accident, I hope?

LOFTY.

Undone, Madam, that's all. His creditors have taken him into custody. A prisoner in his own house.

MRS CROAKER.

A prisoner in his own house! How? At this very time? I'm quite unhappy for him.

LOFTY.

Why, so am I. The man, to be sure, was immensely good-natured. But then I could never find that he had any thing in him.

MRS CROAKER.

His manner, to be sure, was excessive harmless; some, indeed, thought it a little dull. For my part, I always concealed my opinion.

LOFTY.

It can't be concealed, Madam; the man was dull, dull as the last new comedy! a poor impracticable creature! I tried once or twice to know if he was fit for business; but he had scarce talents to be groom-porter to an orange-barrow.

MRS CROAKER.

How differently does Miss Richland think of him! For, I believe, with all his faults, she loves him.

LOFTY.

Loves him! does she? You should cure her of that by all means. Let me see; what if she were sent to him this instant, in his present doleful situation? My life for it, that works her cure. Distress is a perfect antidote to love. Suppose we

join her in the next room? Miss Richland is a fine girl, has a fine fortune, and must not be thrown away. Upon my honour, Madam, I have a regard for Miss Richland; and rather than she should be thrown away, I should think it no indignity to marry her myself. [*Exeunt.*

Enter OLIVIA *and* LEONTINE.

LEONTINE.

And yet, trust me, Olivia, I had every reason to expect Miss Richland's refusal, as I did every thing in my power to deserve it. Her indelicacy surprises me.

OLIVIA.

Sure, Leontine, there's nothing so indelicate in being sensible of your merit. If so, I fear I shall be the most guilty thing alive.

LEONTINE.

But you mistake, my dear. The same attention I used to advance my merit with you, I practised to lessen it with her. What more could I do?

OLIVIA.

Let us now rather consider what is to be done. We have both dissembled too long.—I have always been ashamed—I am now quite weary of it. Sure I could never have undergone so much for any other but you.

LEONTINE.

And you shall find my gratitude equal to your kindest compliance. Though our friends should totally forsake us, Olivia, we can draw upon content for the deficiencies of fortune.

OLIVIA.

Then why should we defer our scheme of humble happiness, when it is now in our power? I may be the favourite of your father, it is true; but can it ever be thought, that his present kindness to a supposed child will continue to a known deceiver?

LEONTINE.

I have many reasons to believe it will. As his attachments are but few, they are lasting. His own marriage was a private one, as ours may be. Besides, I have sounded him already at a distance, and find all his answers exactly to our wish. Nay, by an expression or two that dropped from him, I am induced to think he knows of this affair.

OLIVIA.

Indeed! But that would be a happiness too great to be expected.

LEONTINE.

However it be, I'm certain you have power over him; and I'm persuaded, if you informed him of our situation, that he would be disposed to pardon it.

OLIVIA.

You had equal expectations, Leontine, from your last scheme with Miss Richland, which you find has succeeded most wretchedly.

LEONTINE.

And that's the best reason for trying another.

OLIVIA.

If it must be so, I submit.

LEONTINE.

As we could wish, he comes this way. Now, my dearest Olivia, be resolute. I'll just retire within hearing, to come in at a proper time, either to share your danger, or confirm your victory.

[*Exit.*

Enter CROAKER.

CROAKER.

Yes, I must forgive her; and yet not too easily, neither. It will be proper to keep up the decorums of resentment a little, if it be only to impress her with an idea of my authority.

OLIVIA.

How I tremble to approach him!—Might I presume, Sir,—if I interrupt you—

CROAKER.

No, child, where I have an affection, it is not a little thing that can interrupt me. Affection gets over little things.

OLIVIA.

Sir, you're too kind. I'm sensible how ill I deserve this partiality; yet, Heaven knows, there is nothing I would not do to gain it.

CROAKER.

And you have but too well succeeded, you little hussy, you. With those endearing ways of yours, on my conscience, I could be brought to forgive any thing, unless it were a very great offence indeed.

OLIVIA.

But mine is such an offence—When you know

my guilt—Yes, you shall know it, though I feel the greatest pain in the confession.

CROAKER.

Why, then, if it be so very great a pain, you may spare yourself the trouble; for I know every syllable of the matter before you begin.

OLIVIA.

Indeed! then I'm undone.

CROAKER.

Ay, miss, you wanted to steal a match, without letting me know it, did you? But I'm not worth being consulted, I suppose, when there's to be a marriage in my own family. No, I'm to have no hand in the disposal of my own children. No, I'm nobody. I'm to be a mere article of family lumber; a piece of cracked china to be stuck up in a corner.

OLIVIA.

Dear Sir, nothing but the dread of your authority could induce us to conceal it from you.

CROAKER.

No, no, my consequence is no more; I'm as little minded as a dead Russian in winter, just stuck up with a pipe in its mouth till there comes a thaw —It goes to my heart to vex her. [*Aside.*

OLIVIA.

I was prepared, Sir, for your anger, and despaired of pardon, even while I presumed to ask it. But your severity shall never abate my affection, as my punishment is but justice.

CROAKER.

And yet you should not despair neither, Livy. We ought to hope all for the best.

OLIVIA.

And do you permit me to hope, Sir? Can I ever expect to be forgiven? But hope has too long deceived me.

CROAKER.

Why then, child, it shan't deceive you now, for I forgive you this very moment; I forgive you all! and now you are indeed my daughter.

OLIVIA.

O transport! this kindness overpowers me.

CROAKER.

I was always against severity to our children. We have been young and giddy ourselves, and we can't expect boys and girls to be old before their time.

OLIVIA.

What generosity! But can you forget the many falsehoods, the dissimulation——

CROAKER.

You did indeed dissemble, you urchin you; but where's the girl that won't dissemble for a husband? My wife and I had never been married, if we had not dissembled a little beforehand.

OLIVIA.

It shall be my future care never to put such generosity to a second trial. And as for the partner of my offence and folly, from his native honour, and the just sense he has of his duty, I can answer for him that——

Enter LEONTINE.

LEONTINE.

Permit him thus to answer for himself *(Kneeling)*. Thus, Sir, let me speak my gratitude for this unmerited forgiveness. Yes, Sir, this even exceeds all your former tenderness. I now can boast the most indulgent of fathers. The life he gave, compared to this, was but a trifling blessing.

CROAKER.

And, good Sir, who sent for you, with that fine tragedy face, and flourishing manner? I don't know what we have to do with your gratitude upon this occasion.

LEONTINE.

How, Sir! Is it possible to be silent, when so much obliged? Would you refuse me the pleasure of being grateful? of adding my thanks to my Olivia's? of sharing in the transports that you have thus occasioned?

CROAKER.

Lord, Sir, we can be happy enough without your coming in to make up the party. I don't know what's the matter with the boy all this day; he has got into such a rhodomontade manner all this morning!

LEONTINE.

But, Sir, I that have so large a part in the benefit, is it not my duty to show my joy? is the being admitted to your favour so slight an obligation? is the happiness of marrying my Olivia so small a blessing?

CROAKER.

Marrying Olivia! marrying Olivia! marrying his own sister! Sure the boy is out of his senses. His own sister!

LEONTINE.

My sister!

OLIVIA.

Sister! How have I been mistaken! [*Aside.*

LEONTINE.

Some cursed mistake in all this, I find. [*Aside.*

CROAKER.

What does the booby mean? or has he any meaning? Eh, what do you mean, you blockhead, you?

LEONTINE.

Mean, Sir,—why, Sir—only when my sister is to be married, that I have the pleasure of marrying her, Sir, that is, of giving her away, Sir—I have made a point of it.

CROAKER.

O, is that all? Give her away. You have made a point of it. Then you had as good make a point of first giving away yourself, as I'm going to prepare the writings between you and Miss Richland this very minute. What a fuss is here about nothing! Why, what's the matter now? I thought I had made you at least as happy as you could wish.

OLIVIA.

O! yes, Sir; very happy.

CROAKER.

Do you foresee any thing, child? You look as if you did. I think if any thing was to be foreseen, I have as sharp a look-out as another; and yet I foresee nothing. [*Exit.*

LEONTINE, OLIVIA.

OLIVIA.

What can it mean?

LEONTINE.

He knows something, and yet for my life I can't tell what.

OLIVIA.

It can't be the connexion between us, I'm pretty certain.

LEONTINE.

Whatever it be, my dearest, I'm resolved to put it out of fortune's power to repeat our mortification. I'll haste and prepare for our journey to Scotland this very evening. My friend Honeywood has promised me his advice and assistance. I'll go to him and repose our distresses on his friendly bosom; and I know so much of his honest heart, that if he can't relieve our uneasinesses, he will at least share them. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THIRD.

Scene—*Young* Honeywood's *House.*

Bailiff, Honeywood, Follower.

Bailiff.

Lookye, Sir, I have arrested as good men as you in my time: no disparagement of you neither: Men that would go forty guineas on a game of cribbage. I challenge the town to show a man in more genteeler practice than myself.

Honeywood.

Without all question, Mr ——. I forget your name, Sir?

Bailiff.

How can you forget what you never knew? he! he! he!

Honeywood.

May I beg leave to ask your name?

Bailiff.

Yes, you may.

Honeywood.

Then, pray, Sir, what is your name?

Bailiff.

That I didn't promise to tell you. He! he! he! A joke breaks no bones, as we say among us that practise the law.

HONEYWOOD.

You may have reason for keeping it a secret, perhaps?

BAILIFF.

The law does nothing without reason. I'm asham'd to tell my name to no man, Sir. If you can shew cause, as why, upon a special capus, that I should prove my name—But, come, Timothy Twitch is my name. And, now you know my name, what have you to say to that?

HONEYWOOD.

Nothing in the world, good Mr Twitch, but that I have a favour to ask, that's all.

BAILIFF.

Ay, favours are more easily asked than granted, as we say among us that practise the law. I have taken an oath against granting favours. Would you have me perjure myself?

HONEYWOOD.

But my request will come recommended in so strong a manner, as, I believe, you'll have no scruple *(pulling out his purse)*. The thing is only this: I believe I shall be able to discharge this trifle in two or three days at farthest; but as I would not have the affair known for the world, I have thoughts of keeping you, and your good friend here, about me, till the debt is discharged; for which I shall be properly grateful.

BAILIFF.

Oh! that's another maxum, and altogether within my oath. For certain, if an honest man is to get

any thing by a thing, there's no reason why all things should not be done in civility.

HONEYWOOD.

Doubtless, all trades must live, Mr Twitch; and yours is a necessary one. *(Gives him money).*

BAILIFF.

Oh! your honour; I hope your honour takes nothing amiss as I does, as I does nothing but my duty in so doing. I'm sure no man can say I ever give a gentleman, that was a gentleman, ill usage. If I saw that a gentleman was a gentleman, I have taken money not to see him for ten weeks together.

HONEYWOOD.

Tenderness is a virtue, Mr Twitch.

BAILIFF.

Ay, Sir, it's a perfect treasure. I love to see a gentleman with a tender heart. I don't know, but I think I have a tender heart myself. If all that I have lost by my heart was put together, it would make a—but no matter for that.

HONEYWOOD.

Don't account it lost, Mr Twitch. The ingratitude of the world can never deprive us of the conscious happiness of having acted with humanity ourselves.

BAILIFF.

Humanity, Sir, is a jewel. It's better than gold. I love humanity. People may say, that we in our way have no humanity; but I'll shew you my humanity this moment. There's my follower here, little Flanigan, with a wife and four children, a guinea or two would be more to him, than twice as much to another. Now, as I can't shew him any

humanity myself, I must beg leave you'll do it for me.

HONEYWOOD.

I assure you, Mr Twitch, yours is a most powerful recommendation. (*Giving money to the follower*).

BAILIFF.

Sir, you're a gentleman. I see you know what to do with your money. But, to business: we are to be with you here as your friends, I suppose. But set in case company comes.—Little Flanigan here, to be sure, has a good face; a very good face; but then, he is a little seedy, as we say among us that practise the law. Not well in clothes. Smoke the pocket-holes.

HONEYWOOD.

Well that shall be remedied without delay.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Sir, Miss Richland is below.

HONEYWOOD.

How unlucky! Detain her a moment. We must improve my good friend little Mr Flanigan's appearance first. Here, let Mr Flanigan have a suit of my clothes—quick—the brown and silver—Do you hear?

SERVANT.

That your honour gave away to the begging gentleman that makes verses, because it was as good as new.

HONEYWOOD.

The white and gold then.

SERVANT.

That, your honour, I made bold to sell, because it was good for nothing.

HONEYWOOD.

Well, the first that comes to hand then. The blue and gold then. I believe Mr Flanigan will look best in blue. [*Exit Flanigan.*

BAILIFF.

Rabbit me, but little Flanigan will look well in any thing. Ah, if your honour knew that bit of flesh as well as I do, you'd be perfectly in love with him. There's not a prettier scout in the four counties after a shy-cock than he: scents like a hound; sticks like a weazle. He was master of the ceremonies to the black Queen of Morocco, when I took him to follow me. *(Re-enter Flanigan).* Heh, ecod, I think he looks so well, that I don't care if I have a suit from the same place for myself.

HONEYWOOD.

Well, well, I hear the lady coming. Dear Mr Twitch, I beg you'll give your friend directions not to speak. As for yourself, I know you will say nothing without being directed.

BAILIFF.

Never you fear me; I'll show the lady that I have something to say for myself as well as another. One man has one way of talking, and another man has another, that's all the difference between them.

Enter Miss RICHLAND *and her* MAID.

Miss RICHLAND.

You'll be surprised, Sir, with this visit. But you

know I'm yet to thank you for chusing my little library.

HONEYWOOD.

Thanks, Madam, are unnecessary; as it was I that was obliged by your commands. Chairs here. Two of my very good friends, Mr Twitch and Mr Flanigan. Pray, gentlemen, sit without ceremony.

Miss RICHLAND.

Who can these odd-looking men be! I fear it is as I was informed. It must be so. *(Aside.)*

BAILIFF.

(After a pause.) Pretty weather; very pretty weather for the time of the year, Madam.

FOLLOWER.

Very good circuit weather in the country.

HONEYWOOD.

You officers are generally favourites among the ladies. My friends, Madam, have been upon very disagreeable duty, I assure you. The fair should in some measure recompense the toils of the brave!

Miss RICHLAND.

Our officers do indeed deserve every favour. The gentlemen are in the marine service, I presume, Sir?

HONEYWOOD.

Why, Madam, they do—occasionally serve in the fleet, Madam. A dangerous service!

Miss Richland.

I'm told so. And I own it has often surprised me, that while we have had so many instances of bravery there, we have had so few of wit at home to praise it.

Honeywood.

I grant, Madam, that our poets have not written as our soldiers have fought; but they have done all they could, and Hawke or Amherst could do no more.

Miss Richland.

I'm quite displeased when I see a fine subject spoiled by a dull writer.

Honeywood.

We should not be so severe against dull writers, Madam. It is ten to one but the dullest writer exceeds the most rigid French critic who presumes to despise him.

Follower.

Damn the French, the parle vous, and all that belongs to them.

Miss Richland.

Sir!

Honeywood.

Ha, ha, ha! honest Mr Flanigan. A true English officer, Madam; he's not contented with beating the French, but he will scold them too.

Miss Richland.

Yet, Mr Honeywood, this does not convince me but that severity in criticism is necessary. It

was our first adopting the severity of French taste, that has brought them in turn to taste us.

BAILIFF.

Taste us! By the Lord, Madam, they devour us. Give monseers but a taste, and I'll be damn'd but they come in for a bellyfull.

Miss RICHLAND.

Very extraordinary this!

FOLLOWER.

But very true. What makes the bread rising? the parle vous that devour us. What makes the mutton fivepence a pound? the parle vous that eat it up. What makes the beer threepence-halfpenny a pot?——

HONEYWOOD.

Ah! the vulgar rogues; all will be out. *(Aside.)* Right, gentlemen, very right, upon my word, and quite to the purpose. They draw a parallel, Madam, between the mental taste and that of our senses. We are injured as much by the French severity in the one, as by French rapacity in the other. That's their meaning.

Miss RICHLAND.

Though I don't see the force of the parallel, yet I'll own, that we should sometimes pardon books, as we do our friends, that have now and then agreeable absurdities to recommend them.

BAILIFF.

That's all my eye. The King only can pardon, as the law says: for set in case——

HONEYWOOD.

I'm quite of your opinion, Sir. I see the whole drift of your argument. Yes, certainly, our presuming to pardon any work, is arrogating a power that belongs to another. If all have power to condemn, what writer can be free?

BAILIFF.

By his habus corpus. His habus corpus can set him free at any time: for, set in case—

HONEYWOOD.

I'm obliged to you, Sir, for the hint. If, Madam, as my friend observes, our laws are so careful of a gentleman's person, sure we ought to be equally careful of his dearer part, his fame.

FOLLOWER.

Ay, but if so be a man's nabb'd, you know—

HONEYWOOD.

Mr Flanigan, if you spoke for ever, you could not improve the last observation. For my own part, I think it conclusive.

BAILIFF.

As for the matter of that, mayhap—

HONEYWOOD.

Nay, Sir, give me leave in this instance to be positive. For where is the necessity of censuring works without genius, which must shortly sink of themselves? what is it, but aiming an unnecessary blow against a victim already under the hands of justice?

BAILIFF.

Justice! O, by the-elevens, if you talk about justice, I think I am at home there: for, in a course of law—

HONEYWOOD.

My dear Mr Twitch, I discern what you'd be at perfectly; and I believe the lady must be sensible of the art with which it is introduced. I suppose you perceive the meaning, Madam, of his course of law.

Miss RICHLAND.

I protest, Sir, I do not. I perceive only that you answer one gentleman before he has finished, and the other before he has well begun.

BAILIFF.

Madam, you are a gentlewoman, and I will make the matter out. This here question is about severity, and justice, and pardon, and the like of they. Now, to explain the thing—

HONEYWOOD.

O! curse your explanations. [*Aside.*

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Mr Leontine, Sir, below, desires to speak with you upon earnest business.

HONEYWOOD.

That's lucky. (*Aside.*) Dear Madam, you'll excuse me and my good friends here, for a few minutes. There are books, Madam, to amuse you. Come, gentlemen, you know I make no ceremony with such friends. After you, Sir. Excuse me.

Well, if I must. But I know your natural politeness.

BAILIFF.

Before and behind, you know.

FOLLOWER.

Ay, ay, before and behind, before and behind.
[*Exeunt* Honeywood, Bailiff, and Follower.

Miss RICHLAND.

What can all this mean, Garnet?

GARNET.

Mean, Madam! why, what should it mean, but what Mr Lofty sent you here to see? These people he calls officers, are officers sure enough; sheriff's officers; bailiffs, Madam.

Miss RICHLAND.

Ay, it is certainly so. Well, though his perplexities are far from giving me pleasure, yet I own there's something very ridiculous in them, and a just punishment for his dissimulation.

GARNET.

And so they are. But I wonder, Madam, that the lawyer you just employed to pay his debts, and set him free, has not done it by this time. He ought at least to have been here before now. But lawyers are always more ready to get a man into troubles than out of them.

Enter Sir WILLIAM.

Sir WILLIAM.

For Miss Richland to undertake setting him free, I own, was quite unexpected. It has totally unhinged my schemes to reclaim him. Yet it gives

me pleasure to find, that among a number of worthless friendships, he has made one acquisition of real value; for there must be some softer passion on her side that prompts this generosity. Ha! here before me? I'll endeavour to sound her affections.—Madam, as I am the person that have had some demands upon the gentleman of this house, I hope you'll excuse me, if, before I enlarged him, I wanted to see yourself.

Miss Richland.

The precaution was very unnecessary, Sir. I suppose your wants were only such as my agent had power to satisfy.

Sir William.

Partly, Madam. But I was also willing you should be fully apprised of the character of the gentleman you intended to serve.

Miss Richland.

It must come, Sir, with a very ill grace from you. To censure it after what you have done, would look like malice; and to speak favourably of a character you have oppressed, would be impeaching your own. And sure, his tenderness, his humanity, his universal friendship, may atone for many faults.

Sir William.

That friendship, Madam, which is exerted in too wide a sphere, becomes totally useless. Our bounty, like a drop of water, disappears when diffused too widely. They, who pretend most to this universal benevolence, are either deceivers, or dupes. Men who desire to cover their private ill-nature, by a pretended regard for all; or men who, reasoning themselves into false feelings, are

more earnest in pursuit of splendid, than of useful virtues.

Miss Richland.

I am surprised, Sir, to hear one, who has probably been a gainer by the folly of others, so severe in his censure of it.

Sir William.

Whatever I may have gained by folly, Madam, you see I am willing to prevent your losing by it.

Miss Richland.

Your cares for me, Sir, are unnecessary. I always suspect those services which are denied where they are wanted, and offered, perhaps, in hopes of a refusal. No, Sir, my directions have been given, and I insist upon their being complied with.

Sir William.

Thou amiable woman! I can no longer contain the expressions of my gratitude, my pleasure. You see before you one, who has been equally careful of his interest; one, who has for some time been a concealed spectator of his follies, and only punished in hopes to reclaim him—his uncle!

Miss Richland.

Sir William Honeywood! You amaze me. How shall I conceal my confusion? I fear, Sir, you'll think I have been too forward in my services. I confess I—

Sir William.

Don't make any apologies, Madam. I only find myself unable to repay the obligation. And yet, I have been trying my interest of late to serve

you. Having learnt, Madam, that you had some demands upon Government, I have, though unasked, been your solicitor there.

Miss Richland.

Sir, I'm infinitely obliged to your intentions. But my guardian has employed another gentleman, who assures him of success.

Sir William.

Who, the important little man that visits here? Trust me, Madam, he's quite contemptible among men in power, and utterly unable to serve you. Mr Lofty's promises are much better known to people of fashion, than his person, I assure you.

Miss Richland.

How have we been deceived! As sure as can be here he comes.

Sir William.

Does he? Remember I'm to continue unknown. My return to England has not yet been made public. With what impudence he enters!

Enter Lofty.

Lofty.

Let the chariot—let my chariot drive off; I'll visit to his Grace's in a chair. Miss Richland here before me! Punctual, as usual, to the calls of humanity. I'm very sorry, Madam, things of this kind should happen, especially to a man I have shewn every-where, and carried amongst us as a particular acquaintance.

Miss Richland.

I find, Sir, you have the art of making the misfortunes of others your own.

LOFTY.

My dear Madam, what can a private man like me do? One man can't do every thing; and then, I do so much in this way every day:—Let me see; something considerable might be done for him by subscription; it could not fail if I carried the list. I'll undertake to set down a brace of dukes, two dozen lords, and half the lower house, at my own peril.

Sir WILLIAM.

And, after all, it's more than probable, Sir, he might reject the offer of such powerful patronage.

LOFTY.

Then, Madam, what can we do? You know I never make promises. In truth, I once or twice tried to do something with him in the way of business; but, as I often told his uncle, Sir William Honeywood, the man was utterly impracticable.

Sir WILLIAM.

His uncle! then that gentleman, I suppose, is a particular friend of yours.

LOFTY.

Meaning me, Sir?—Yes, Madam, as I often said, My dear Sir William, you are sensible I would do any thing, as far as my poor interest goes, to serve your family: but what can be done? there's no procuring first-rate places for ninth-rate abilities.

Miss RICHLAND.

I have heard of Sir William Honeywood; he's abroad in employment: he confided in your judgment, I suppose?

LOFTY.

Why, yes, Madam, I believe Sir William had some reason to confide in my judgment; one little reason, perhaps.

Miss RICHLAND.

Pray, Sir, what was it?

LOFTY.

Why, Madam—but let it go no farther—it was I procured him his place.

Sir WILLIAM.

Did you, Sir?

LOFTY.

Either you or I, Sir.

Miss RICHLAND.

This, Mr Lofty, was very kind indeed.

LOFTY.

I did love him, to be sure; he had some amusing qualities; no man was fitter to be a toast-master to a club, or had a better head.

Miss RICHLAND.

A better head?

LOFTY.

Ay, at a bottle. To be sure he was as dull as a choice spirit: but, hang it, he was grateful, very grateful; and gratitude hides a multitude of faults.

Sir WILLIAM.

He might have reason, perhaps. His place is pretty considerable, I'm told.

LOFTY.

A trifle, a mere trifle among us men of business. The truth is, he wanted dignity to fill up a greater.

Sir WILLIAM.

Dignity of person, do you mean, Sir? I'm told he's much about my size and figure, Sir.

LOFTY.

Ay, tall enough for a marching regiment; but then he wanted a something—a consequence of form—a kind of a—I believe the lady perceives my meaning.

Miss RICHLAND.

O, perfectly; you courtiers can do any thing, I see.

LOFTY.

My dear Madam, all this is but a mere exchange; we do greater things for one another every day. Why, as thus, now: let me suppose you the first lord of the treasury; you have an employment in you that I want; I have a place in me that you want; do me here, do you there: interest of both sides, few words, flat, done and done, and it's over.

Sir WILLIAM.

A thought strikes me. *(Aside.)* Now you mention Sir William Honeywood, Madam, and as he seems, Sir, an acquaintance of yours, you'll be glad to hear he is arrived from Italy; I had it from a friend who knows him as well as he does me, and you may depend on my information.

LOFTY.

The devil he is! If I had known that, we should not have been quite so well acquainted. [*Aside.*

Sir WILLIAM.

He is certainly returned; and as this gentleman is a friend of yours, he can be of signal service to us, by introducing me to him; there are some papers relative to your affairs that require dispatch, and his inspection.

Miss RICHLAND.

This gentleman, Mr Lofty, is a person employed in my affairs: I know you'll serve us.

LOFTY.

My dear Madam, I live but to serve you. Sir William shall even wait upon him, if you think proper to command it.

Sir WILLIAM.

That would be quite unnecessary.

LOFTY.

Well, we must introduce you then. Call upon me—let me see—ay, in two days.

Sir WILLIAM.

Now, or the opportunity will be lost for ever.

LOFTY.

Well, if it must be now, now let it be. But damn it, that's unfortunate; my Lord Grig's cursed Pensacola business comes on this very hour, and I'm engaged to attend—another time—

Sir WILLIAM.

A short letter to Sir William will do.

LOFTY.

You shall have it; yet, in my opinion, a letter is

a very bad way of going to work; face to face, that's my way.

Sir WILLIAM.

The letter, Sir, will do quite as well.

LOFTY.

Zounds! Sir, do you pretend to direct me? direct me in the business of office? Do you know me, Sir? who am I?

Miss RICHLAND.

Dear Mr Lofty, this request is not so much his as mine; if my commands—but you despise my power.

LOFTY.

Delicate creature! your commands could even controul a debate at midnight: to a power so constitutional, I am all obedience and tranquillity. He shall have a letter: where is my secretary? Dubardieu! And yet, I protest I don't like this way of doing business. I think if I spoke first to Sir William—But you will have it so.

[*Exit with* Miss RICHLAND.

Sir WILLIAM *(alone)*.

Ha, ha, ha!—This too is one of my nephew's hopeful associates. O vanity, thou constant deceiver, how do all thy efforts to exalt, serve but to sink us! Thy false colourings, like those employed to heighten beauty, only seem to mend that bloom which they contribute to destroy. I'm not displeased at this interview: exposing this fellow's impudence to the contempt it deserves, may be of use to my design; at least, if he can reflect, it will be of use to himself.

Enter JARVIS.

Sir WILLIAM.

How now, Jarvis, where's your master, my nephew?

JARVIS.

At his wit's ends, I believe: he's scarce gotten out of one scrape, but he's running his head into another.

Sir WILLIAM.

How so?

JARVIS.

The house has but just been cleared of the bailiffs, and now he's again engaging tooth and nail in assisting old Croaker's son to patch up a clandestine match with the young lady that passes in the house for his sister.

Sir WILLIAM.

Ever busy to serve others.

JARVIS.

Ay, any body but himself. The young couple, it seems, are just setting out for Scotland; and he supplies them with money for the journey.

Sir WILLIAM.

Money! how is he able to supply others, who has scarce any for himself?

JARVIS.

Why, there it is: he has no money, that's true; but then, as he never said *No* to any request in his life, he has given them a bill, drawn by a friend of

his upon a merchant in the city, which I am to get changed; for you must know that I am to go with them to Scotland myself.

Sir WILLIAM.

How?

JARVIS.

It seems the young gentleman is obliged to take a different road from his mistress, as he is to call upon an uncle of his that lives out of the way, in order to prepare a place for their reception when they return; so they have borrowed me from my master, as the properest person to attend the young lady down.

Sir WILLIAM.

To the land of matrimony! A pleasant journey, Jarvis.

JARVIS.

Ay, but I'm only to have all the fatigues on't.

Sir WILLIAM.

Well, it may be shorter, and less fatiguing, than you imagine. I know but too much of the young lady's family and connexions, whom I have seen abroad. I have also discovered that Miss Richland is not indifferent to my thoughtless nephew; and will endeavour, though I fear in vain, to establish that connexion. But, come, the letter I wait for must be almost finished; I'll let you farther into my intentions in the next room. [*Exeunt.*

ACT FOURTH.

Scene—Croaker's *House.*

Lofty.

Well, sure the devil's in me of late, for running my head into such defiles, as nothing but a genius like my own could draw me from. I was formerly contented to husband out my places and pensions with some degree of frugality; but, curse it, of late I have given away the whole Court Register in less time than they could print the title page: yet, hang it, why scruple a lie or two to come at a fine girl, when I every day tell a thousand for nothing. Ha! Honeywood here before me. Could Miss Richland have set him at liberty?

Enter Honeywood.

Mr Honeywood, I'm glad to see you abroad again. I find my concurrence was not necessary in your unfortunate affairs. I had put things in a train to do your business; but it is not for me to say what I intended doing.

Honeywood.

It was unfortunate indeed, Sir. But what adds to my uneasiness is, that while you seem to be acquainted with my misfortune, I myself continue still a stranger to my benefactor.

LOFTY.

How! not know the friend that served you?

HONEYWOOD.

Can't guess at the person.

LOFTY.

Inquire.

HONEYWOOD.

I have; but all I can learn is, that he chuses to remain concealed, and that all inquiry must be fruitless.

LOFTY.

Must be fruitless!

HONEYWOOD.

Absolutely fruitless.

LOFTY.

Sure of that?

HONEYWOOD.

Very sure.

LOFTY.

Then I'll be damn'd if you shall ever know it from me.

HONEYWOOD.

How, Sir?

LOFTY.

I suppose now, Mr Honeywood, you think my rent-roll very considerable, and that I have vast

sums of money to throw away; I know you do. The world, to be sure, says such things of me.

HONEYWOOD.

The world, by what I learn, is no stranger to your generosity. But where does this tend?

LOFTY.

To nothing; nothing in the world. The town, to be sure, when it makes such a thing as me the subject of conversation, has asserted, that I never yet patronized a man of merit.

HONEYWOOD.

I have heard instances to the contrary, even from yourself.

LOFTY.

Yes, Honeywood; and there are instances to the contrary, that you shall never hear from myself.

HONEYWOOD.

Ha! dear Sir, permit me to ask you but one question.

LOFTY.

Sir, ask me no questions; I say, Sir, ask me no questions; I'll be damn'd if I answer them.

HONEYWOOD.

I will ask no farther. My friend! my benefactor! it is, it must be here, that I am indebted for freedom, for honour. Yes, thou worthiest of men, from the beginning I suspected it, but was afraid to return thanks; which, if undeserved, might seem reproaches.

LOFTY.

I protest I do not understand all this, Mr Honeywood: You treat me very cavalierly. I do assure you, Sir—Blood, Sir, can't a man be permitted to enjoy the luxury of his own feelings, without all this parade?

HONEYWOOD.

Nay, do not attempt to conceal an action that adds to your honour. Your looks, your air, your manner, all confess it.

LOFTY.

Confess it, Sir! torture itself, Sir, shall never bring me to confess it. Mr Honeywood, I have admitted you upon terms of friendship. Don't let us fall out; make me happy, and let this be buried in oblivion. You know I hate ostentation; you know I do. Come, come, Honeywood, you know I always loved to be a friend, and not a patron. I beg this may make no kind of distance between us. Come, come, you and I must be more familiar—Indeed we must.

HONEYWOOD.

Heavens! Can I ever repay such friendship? Is there any way?—Thou best of men, can I ever return the obligation?

LOFTY.

A bagatelle, a mere bagatelle! But I see your heart is labouring to be grateful. You shall be grateful. It would be cruel to disappoint you.

HONEYWOOD.

How! teach me the manner. Is there any way?

LOFTY.

From this moment you're mine. Yes, my friend, you shall know it—I'm in love.

HONEYWOOD.

And can I assist you?

LOFTY.

Nobody so well.

HONEYWOOD.

In what manner? I'm all impatience.

LOFTY.

You shall make love for me.

HONEYWOOD.

And to whom shall I speak in your favour?

LOFTY.

To a lady with whom you have great interest, I assure you: Miss Richland.

HONEYWOOD.

Miss Richland!

LOFTY.

Yes, Miss Richland. She has struck the blow up to the hilt in my bosom, by Jupiter.

HONEYWOOD.

Heavens! was ever any thing more unfortunate? It is too much to be endured.

LOFTY.

Unfortunate, indeed! And yet I can endure it, till you have opened the affair to her for me. Be-

tween ourselves, I think she likes me. I'm not apt to boast, but I think she does.

HONEYWOOD.

Indeed! But, do you know the person you apply to?

LOFTY.

Yes, I know you are her friend and mine: that's enough. To you, therefore, I commit the success of my passion. I'll say no more, let friendship do the rest. I have only to add, that if at any time my little interest can be of service—but, hang it, I'll make no promises—you know my interest is yours at any time. No apologies, my friend, I'll not be answered; it shall be so. [*Exit.*

HONEYWOOD.

Open, generous, unsuspecting man! He little thinks that I love her too; and with such an ardent passion!—But then it was ever but a vain and hopeless one; my torment, my persecution! What shall I do? Love, friendship; a hopeless passion, a deserving friend! Love, that has been my tormentor; a friend, that has, perhaps, distressed himself to serve me. It shall be so. Yes, I will discard the fondling hope from my bosom, and exert all my influence in his favour. And yet to see her in the possession of another!—Insupportable! But then to betray a generous, trusting friend!—Worse, worse! Yes, I'm resolved. Let me but be the instrument of their happiness, and then quit a country, where I must for ever despair of finding my own. [*Exit.*

Enter Olivia, *and* Garnet, *who carries a milliner's box.*

Olivia.

Dear me, I wish this journey were over. No news of Jarvis yet? I believe the old peevish creature delays purely to vex me.

Garnet.

Why, to be sure, Madam, I did hear him say, a little snubbing before marriage would teach you to bear it the better afterwards.

Olivia.

To be gone a full hour, though he had only to get a bill changed in the city! How provoking!

Garnet.

I'll lay my life, Mr Leontine, that had twice as much to do, is setting off by this time from his inn; and here you are left behind.

Olivia.

Well, let us be prepared for his coming, however. Are you sure you have omitted nothing, Garnet?

Garnet.

Not a stick, Madam—all's here. Yet I wish you could take the white and silver to be married in. It's the worst luck in the world, in any thing but white. I knew one Bett Stubbs, of our town, that was married in red; and, as sure as eggs is eggs, the bridegroom and she had a miff before morning.

Olivia.

No matter. I'm all impatience till we are out of the house.

GARNET.

Bless me, Madam, I had almost forgot the wedding ring!—The sweet little thing—I don't think it would go on my little finger. And what if I put in a gentleman's night-cap, in case of necessity, Madam?—But here's Jarvis.

Enter JARVIS.

OLIVIA.

O Jarvis, are you come at last? We have been ready this half hour. Now let's be going. Let us fly!

JARVIS.

Ay, to Jericho; for we shall have no going to Scotland this bout, I fancy.

OLIVIA.

How! what's the matter?

JARVIS.

Money, money, is the matter, Madam. We have got no money. What the plague do you send me of your fool's errand for? My master's bill upon the city is not worth a rush. Here it is; Mrs Garnet may pin up her hair with it.

OLIVIA.

Undone! How could Honeywood serve us so? What shall we do? Can't we go without it?

JARVIS.

Go to Scotland without money! To Scotland without money! Lord, how some people understand geography! We might as well set sail for Patagonia upon a cork-jacket.

OLIVIA.

Such a disappointment! What a base insincere man was your master, to serve us in this manner! Is this his good-nature?

JARVIS.

Nay, don't talk ill of my master, Madam. I won't bear to hear any body talk ill of him but myself.

GARNET.

Bless us! now I think on't, Madam, you need not be under any uneasiness: I saw Mr Leontine receive forty guineas from his father just before he set out, and he can't yet have left the inn. A short letter will reach him there.

OLIVIA.

Well remembered, Garnet; I'll write immediately. How's this! Bless me, my hand trembles so, I can't write a word. Do you write, Garnet; and, upon second thought, it will be better from you.

GARNET.

Truly, Madam, I write and indite but poorly. I never was kute at my learning. But I'll do what I can to please you. Let me see. All out of my own head, I suppose!

OLIVIA.

Whatever you please.

GARNET.

(Writing.) Muster Croaker—Twenty guineas, Madam?

OLIVIA.

Ay, twenty will do.

GARNET.

At the bar of the Talbot till called for. Expedition—Will be blown up—All of a flame—Quick dispatch—Cupid, the little god of love.—I conclude it, Madam, with Cupid: I love to see a love-letter end like poetry.

OLIVIA.

Well, well, what you please, any thing. But how shall we send it? I can trust none of the servants of this family.

GARNET.

Odso, Madam, Mr Honeywood's butler is in the next room: he's a dear, sweet man; he'll do any thing for me.

JARVIS.

He! the dog, he'll certainly commit some blunder. He's drunk and sober ten times a-day.

OLIVIA.

No matter. Fly, Garnet; any body we can trust will do. [*Exit Garnet.*] Well, Jarvis, now we can have nothing more to interrupt us; you may take up the things, and carry them on to the inn. Have you no hands, Jarvis?

JARVIS.

Soft and fair, young lady. You, that are going to be married, think things can never be done too fast; but we, that are old, and know what we are about, must elope methodically, Madam.

OLIVIA.

Well, sure, if my indiscretions were to be done over again——

JARVIS.

My life for it, you would do them ten times over.

OLIVIA.

Why will you talk so? If you knew how unhappy they make me——

JARVIS.

Very unhappy, no doubt: I was once just as unhappy when I was going to be married myself. I'll tell you a story about that——

OLIVIA.

A story! when I'm all impatience to be away. Was there ever such a dilatory creature!——

JARVIS.

Well, Madam, if we must march, why we will march, that's all. Though, odds-bobs, we have still forgot one thing; we should never travel without—a case of good razors, and a box of shaving powder. But no matter, I believe we shall be pretty well shaved by the way. [*Going.*

Enter GARNET.

GARNET.

Undone, undone, Madam. Ah, Mr Jarvis, you said right enough. As sure as death, Mr Honeywood's rogue of a drunken butler dropped the letter before he went ten yards from the door. There's old Croaker has just picked it up, and is this moment reading it to himself in the hall.

OLIVIA.

Unfortunate! we shall be discovered.

GARNET.

No, Madam; don't be uneasy, he can make neither head nor tail of it. To be sure he looks as if he was broke loose from Bedlam about it, but he can't find what it means for all that. O lud, he is coming this way all in the horrors!

OLIVIA.

Then let us leave the house this instant, for fear he should ask farther questions. In the mean time, Garnet, do you write and send off just such another.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter CROAKER.

CROAKER.

Death and destruction! Are all the horrors of air, fire, and water, to be levelled only at me? Am I only to be singled out for gunpowder-plots, combustibles and conflagration? Here it is—An incendiary letter dropped at my door. "To Muster Croaker, these with speed." Ay, ay, plain enough the direction: all in the genuine incendiary spelling, and as cramp as the devil. "With speed." O, confound your speed. But let me read it once more. *(Reads.)* "Muster Croaker, as sone as yowe see this, leve twenty guineas at the bar of the Talboot tell called for, or yowe and yower experetion will be all blown up." Ah, but too plain. Blood and gunpowder in every line of it. Blown up! murderous dog! All blown up! Heavens! what have I and my poor family done, to be all blown up? *(Reads.)* "Our pockets are low, and money we must have." Ay, there's the reason; they'll blow us up, because they have got low pockets. *(Reads.)* "It is but a short time you have to consider; for if this takes wind, the house will quickly

be all of a flame." Inhuman monsters! blow us up, and then burn us! The earthquake at Lisbon was but a bonfire to it. *(Reads.)* "Make quick dispatch, and so no more at present. But may Cupid, the little god of love, go with you wherever you go." The little god of love! Cupid, the little god of love go with me!—Go you to the devil, you and your little Cupid together. I'm so frightened, I scarce know whether I sit, stand, or go. Perhaps this moment I'm treading on lighted matches, blazing brimstone, and barrels of gunpowder. They are preparing to blow me up into the clouds. Murder! We shall be all burnt in our beds; we shall be all burnt in our beds.

Enter Miss Richland.

Miss Richland.

Lord, Sir, what's the matter?

Croaker.

Murder's the matter. We shall be all blown up in our beds before morning.

Miss Richland.

I hope not, Sir.

Croaker.

What signifies what you hope, Madam, when I have a certificate of it here in my hand? Will nothing alarm my family? Sleeping and eating, sleeping and eating is the only work from morning till night in my house. My insensible crew could sleep though rocked by an earthquake, and fry beef-steaks at a volcano.

Miss Richland.

But, Sir, you have alarmed them so often al-

ready; we have nothing but earthquakes, famines, plagues, and mad dogs, from year's end to year's end. You remember, Sir, it is not above a month ago, you assured us of a conspiracy among the bakers to poison us in our bread; and so kept the whole family a week upon potatoes.

CROAKER.

And potatoes were too good for them. But why do I stand talking here with a girl, when I should be facing the enemy without? Here, John, Nicodemus, search the house. Look into the cellars, to see if there be any combustibles below; and above, in the apartments, that no matches be thrown in at the windows. Let all the fires be put out, and let the engine be drawn out in the yard, to play upon the house in case of necessity.

[*Exit.*

Miss RICHLAND.

(Alone.) What can he mean by all this? Yet why should I inquire, when he alarms us in this manner almost every day. But Honeywood has desired an interview with me in private. What can he mean? or rather, what means this palpitation at his approach? It is the first time he ever shewed any thing in his conduct that seemed particular. Sure he cannot mean to——but he's here.

Enter HONEYWOOD.

HONEYWOOD.

I presumed to solicit this interview, Madam, before I left town, to be permitted——

Miss RICHLAND.

Indeed! Leaving town, Sir?—

HONEYWOOD.

Yes, Madam; perhaps the kingdom. I have presumed, I say, to desire the favour of this interview,—in order to disclose something which our long friendship prompts. And yet my fears—

Miss RICHLAND.

His fears! What are his fears to mine! *(Aside.)* We have indeed been long acquainted, Sir; very long. If I remember, our first meeting was at the French ambassador's.—Do you recollect how you were pleased to rally me upon my complexion there?

HONEYWOOD.

Perfectly, Madam: I presumed to reprove you for painting; but your warmer blushes soon convinced the company, that the colouring was all from nature.

Miss RICHLAND.

And yet you only meant it in your good-natur'd way, to make me pay a compliment to myself. In the same manner you danced that night with the most awkward woman in company, because you saw nobody else would take her out.

HONEYWOOD.

Yes; and was rewarded the next night, by dancing with the finest woman in company, whom every body wished to take out.

Miss RICHLAND.

Well, Sir, if you thought so then, I fear your judgment has since corrected the errors of a first impression. We generally show to most advantage at first. Our sex are like poor tradesmen,

that put all their best goods to be seen at the windows.

HONEYWOOD.

The first impression, Madam, did indeed deceive me. I expected to find a woman with all the faults of conscious flattered beauty: I expected to find her vain and insolent. But every day has since taught me, that it is possible to possess sense without pride, and beauty without affectation.

Miss RICHLAND.

This, Sir, is a style very unusual with Mr Honeywood; and I should be glad to know why he thus attempts to increase that vanity, which his own lessons have taught me to despise.

HONEYWOOD.

I ask pardon, Madam. Yet, from our long friendship, I presumed I might have some right to offer, without offence, what you may refuse without offending.

Miss RICHLAND.

Sir! I beg you'd reflect: though, I fear, I shall scarce have any power to refuse a request of yours, yet you may be precipitate: consider, Sir.

HONEYWOOD.

I own my rashness; but as I plead the cause of friendship, of one who loves—Don't be alarmed, Madam—who loves you with the most ardent passion, whose whole happiness is placed in you——

Miss RICHLAND.

I fear, Sir, I shall never find whom you mean, by this description of him.

HONEYWOOD.

Ah, Madam, it but too plainly points him out; though he should be too humble himself to urge his pretensions, or you too modest to understand them.

Miss RICHLAND.

Well; it would be affectation any longer to pretend ignorance; and I will own, Sir, I have long been prejudiced in his favour. It was but natural to wish to make his heart mine, as he seemed himself ignorant of its value.

HONEYWOOD.

I see she always loved him. *(Aside.)* I find, Madam, you're already sensible of his worth, his passion. How happy is my friend, to be the favourite of one with such sense to distinguish merit, and such beauty to reward it.

Miss RICHLAND.

Your friend, Sir! What friend?

HONEYWOOD.

My best friend—my friend Mr Lofty, Madam.

Miss RICHLAND.

He, Sir!

HONEYWOOD.

Yes, he, Madam. He is, indeed, what your warmest wishes might have formed him; and to his other qualities he adds that of the most passionate regard for you.

Miss Richland.

Amazement!—No more of this, I beg you, Sir.

Honeywood.

I see your confusion, Madam, and know how to interpret it. And, since I so plainly read the language of your heart, shall I make my friend happy, by communicating your sentiments?

Miss Richland.

By no means.

Honeywood.

Excuse me, I must; I know you desire it.

Miss Richland.

Mr Honeywood, let me tell you, that you wrong my sentiments and yourself. When I first applied to your friendship, I expected advice and assistance; but now, Sir, I see that it is in vain to expect happiness from him, who has been so bad an economist of his own; and that I must disclaim his friendship who ceases to be a friend to himself.

[*Exit.*

Honeywood.

How is this! she has confessed she loved him, and yet she seemed to part in displeasure. Can I have done any thing to reproach myself with? No; I believe not: yet after all, these things should not be done by a third person: I should have spared her confusion. My friendship carried me a little too far.

Enter CROAKER, *with the letter in his hand, and* Mrs CROAKER.

Mrs CROAKER.

Ha! ha! ha! And so, my dear, it's your supreme wish that I should be quite wretched upon this occasion? ha! ha!

CROAKER.

(Mimicking.) Ha! ha! ha! And so, my dear, it's your supreme pleasure to give me no better consolation?

Mrs CROAKER.

Positively, my dear; what is this incendiary stuff and trumpery to me? our house may travel through the air like the house of Loretto, for aught I care, if I am to be miserable in it.

CROAKER.

Would to Heaven it were converted into a house of correction for your benefit. Have we not every thing to alarm us? Perhaps this very moment the tragedy is beginning.

Mrs CROAKER.

Then let us reserve our distress till the rising of the curtain, or give them the money they want, and have done with them.

CROAKER.

Give them my money!—And pray, what right have they to my money?

Mrs CROAKER.

And pray, what right then have you to my good-humour?

CROAKER.

And so your good-humour advises me to part with my money? Why then, to tell your good-humour a piece of my mind, I'd sooner part with my wife. Here's Mr Honeywood, see what he'll say to it. My dear Honeywood, look at this incendiary letter dropped at my door. It will freeze you with terror; and yet lovey here can read it—can read it, and laugh.

MRS CROAKER.

Yes, and so will Mr Honeywood.

CROAKER.

If he does, I'll suffer to be hanged the next minute in the rogue's place, that's all.

MRS CROAKER.

Speak, Mr Honeywood; is there any thing more foolish than my husband's fright upon this occasion?

HONEYWOOD.

It would not become me to decide, Madam; but, doubtless, the greatness of his terrors now will but invite them to renew their villany another time.

MRS CROAKER.

I told you, he'd be of my opinion.

CROAKER.

How, Sir! do you maintain that I should lie down under such an injury, and shew, neither by my tears nor complaints, that I have something of the spirit of a man in me?

HONEYWOOD.

Pardon me, Sir. You ought to make the loudest complaints, if you desire redress. The surest way to have redress, is to be earnest in the pursuit of it.

CROAKER.

Ay, whose opinion is he of now?

Mrs CROAKER.

But don't you think that laughing off our fears is the best way?

HONEYWOOD.

What is the best, Madam, few can say; but I'll maintain it to be a very wise way.

CROAKER.

But we're talking of the best. Surely the best way is to face the enemy in the field, and not wait till he plunders us in our very bed-chamber.

HONEYWOOD.

Why, Sir, as to the best, that—that's a very wise way too.

Mrs CROAKER.

But can any thing be more absurd, than to double our distresses by our apprehensions, and put it in the power of every low fellow, that can scrawl ten words of wretched spelling, to torment us?

HONEYWOOD.

Without doubt, nothing more absurd.

CROAKER.

How! would it not be more absurd to despise the rattle till we are bit by the snake?

HONEYWOOD.

Without doubt, perfectly absurd.

CROAKER.

Then you are of my opinion?

HONEYWOOD.

Entirely.

Mrs CROAKER.

And you reject mine?

HONEYWOOD.

Heavens forbid, Madam! No sure, no reasoning can be more just than yours. We ought certainly to despise malice if we cannot oppose it, and not make the incendiary's pen as fatal to our repose as the highwayman's pistol.

Mrs CROAKER.

O! then you think I'm quite right?

HONEYWOOD.

Perfectly right.

CROAKER.

A plague of plagues, we can't be both right. I ought to be sorry, or I ought to be glad. My hat must be on my head, or my hat must be off.

Mrs CROAKER.

Certainly, in two opposite opinions, if one be

perfectly reasonable, the other can't be perfectly right.

HONEYWOOD.

And why may not both be right, Madam? Mr Croaker in earnestly seeking redress, and you in waiting the event with good-humour? Pray, let me see the letter again. I have it. This letter requires twenty guineas to be left at the bar of the Talbot Inn. If it be indeed an incendiary letter, what if you and I, Sir, go there; and, when the writer comes to be paid for his expected booty, seize him?

CROAKER.

My dear friend, it's the very thing; the very thing. While I walk by the door, you shall plant yourself in ambush near the bar; burst out upon the miscreant like a masked battery; extort a confession at once, and so hang him up by surprise.

HONEYWOOD.

Yes, but I would not chuse to exercise too much severity. It is my maxim, Sir, that crimes generally punish themselves.

CROAKER.

Well, but we may upbraid him a little, I suppose? *(Ironically.)*

HONEYWOOD.

Ay, but not punish him too rigidly.

CROAKER.

Well, well, leave that to my own benevolence.

HONEYWOOD.

Well, I do; but remember that universal benevolence is the first law of nature.

[*Exeunt* HONEYWOOD *and* Mrs CROAKER.

CROAKER.

Yes; and my universal benevolence will hang the dog, if he had as many necks as a hydra.

ACT FIFTH.

Scene—An Inn.

Enter Olivia, Jarvis.

Olivia.

Well, we have got safe to the inn, however. Now, if the post-chaise were ready——

Jarvis.

The horses are just finishing their oats; and, as they are not going to be married, they choose to take their own time.

Olivia.

You are for ever giving wrong motives to my impatience.

Jarvis.

Be as impatient as you will, the horses must take their own time; besides, you don't consider we have got no answer from our fellow-traveller yet. If we hear nothing from Mr Leontine, we have only one way left us.

Olivia.

What way?

Jarvis.

The way home again.

OLIVIA.

Not so. I have made a resolution to go, and nothing shall induce me to break it.

JARVIS.

Ay; resolutions are well kept, when they jump with inclination. However, I'll go hasten things without. And I'll call, too, at the bar, to see if any thing should be left for us there. Don't be in such a plaguy hurry, Madam, and we shall go the faster, I promise you. [*Exit* JARVIS.

Enter LANDLADY.

LANDLADY.

What! Solomon, why don't you move? Pipes and tobacco for the Lamb there.—Will nobody answer? To the Dolphin; quick. The Angel has been outrageous this half hour. Did your ladyship call, Madam?

OLIVIA.

No, Madam.

LANDLADY.

I find as you're for Scotland, Madam.—But that's no business of mine; married, or not married, I ask no questions. To be sure we had a sweet little couple set off from this two days ago for the same place. The gentleman, for a tailor, was, to be sure, as fine a spoken tailor as ever blew froth from a full pot. And the young lady so bashful, it was near half an hour before we could get her to finish a pint of raspberry between us.

OLIVIA.

But this gentleman and I are not going to be married, I assure you.

LANDLADY.

May be not. That's no business of mine; for certain, Scotch marriages seldom turn out. There was, of my own knowledge, Miss Macfag, that married her father's footman—Alack-a-day, she and her husband soon parted, and now keep separate cellars in Hedge-lane.

OLIVIA.

A very pretty picture of what lies before me! [*Aside.*

Enter LEONTINE.

LEONTINE.

My dear Olivia, my anxiety, till you were out of danger, was too great to be resisted. I could not help coming to see you set out, though it exposes us to a discovery.

OLIVIA.

May every thing you do prove as fortunate. Indeed, Leontine, we have been most cruelly disappointed. Mr Honeywood's bill upon the city has, it seems, been protested, and we have been utterly at a loss how to proceed.

LEONTINE.

How! an offer of his own too. Sure, he could not mean to deceive us?

OLIVIA.

Depend upon his sincerity; he only mistook the desire for the power of serving us. But let us think no more of it. I believe the post-chaise is ready by this.

LANDLADY.

Not quite yet; and, begging your ladyship's pardon, I don't think your ladyship quite ready for the post-chaise. The north-road is a cold place, Madam. I have a drop in the house of as pretty raspberry as ever was tipt over tongue. Just a thimble-full to keep the wind off your stomach. To be sure, the last couple we had here, they said it was a perfect nosegay. Ecod, I sent them both away as good-natured—Up went the blinds, round went the wheels, and drive away post-boy, was the word.

Enter CROAKER.

CROAKER.

Well, while my friend Honeywood is upon the post of danger at the bar, it must be my business to have an eye about me here. I think I know an incendiary's look; for wherever the devil makes a purchase, he never fails to set his mark. Ha! who have we here? My son and daughter! What can they be doing here?

LANDLADY.

I tell you, Madam, it will do you good; I think I know by this time what's good for the north-road. It's a raw night, Madam.—Sir—

LEONTINE.

Not a drop more, good Madam. I should now take it as a greater favour, if you hasten the horses, for I am afraid to be seen myself.

LANDLADY.

That shall be done. Wha, Solomon! are you all dead there? Wha, Solomon, I say!

[*Exit, bawling.*

OLIVIA.

Well, I dread lest an expedition begun in fear, should end in repentance.—Every moment we stay increases our danger, and adds to my apprehensions.

LEONTINE.

There's no danger, trust me, my dear; there can be none. If Honeywood has acted with honour, and kept my father, as he promised, in employment till we are out of danger, nothing can interrupt our journey.

OLIVIA.

I have no doubt of Mr Honeywood's sincerity, and even his desires to serve us. My fears are from your father's suspicions. A mind so disposed to be alarmed without a cause, will be but too ready when there's a reason.

LEONTINE.

Why let him when we are out of his power. But believe me, Olivia, you have no great reason to dread his resentment. His repining temper, as it does no manner of injury to himself, so will it never do harm to others. He only frets to keep himself employed, and scolds for his private amusement.

OLIVIA.

I don't know that; but, I'm sure, on some occasions it makes him look most shockingly.

CROAKER, *discovering himself.*

How does he look now?—How does he look now?

OLIVIA.

Ah!

LEONTINE.

Undone.

CROAKER.

How do I look now? Sir, I am your very humble servant. Madam, I am yours. What, you are going off, are you? Then, first, if you please, take a word or two from me with you before you go. Tell me first where you are going; and when you have told me that, perhaps I shall know as little as I did before.

LEONTINE.

If that be so, our answer might but increase your displeasure, without adding to your information.

CROAKER.

I want no information from you, puppy: and you too, good Madam, what answer have you got? Eh! *(A cry without, Stop him.)* I think I heard a noise. My friend Honeywood without—has he seized the incendiary? Ah, no, for now I hear no more on't.

LEONTINE.

Honeywood without! Then, Sir, it was Mr Honeywood that directed you hither?

CROAKER.

No, Sir, it was Mr Honeywood conducted me hither.

LEONTINE.

Is it possible?

CROAKER.

Possible! Why he's in the house now, Sir; more anxious about me than my own son, Sir.

LEONTINE.

Then, Sir, he's a villain.

CROAKER.

How, sirrah! a villain, because he takes most care of your father? I'll not bear it. I tell you I'll not bear it. Honeywood is a friend to the family, and I'll have him treated as such.

LEONTINE.

I shall study to repay his friendship as it deserves.

CROAKER.

Ah, rogue, if you knew how earnestly he entered into my griefs, and pointed out the means to detect them, you would love him as I do. *(A cry without, Stop him.)* Fire and fury! they have seized the incendiary: they have the villain, the incendiary in view. Stop him! stop an incendiary! a murderer! stop him! [*Exit.*

OLIVIA.

O, my terrors! What can this tumult mean?

LEONTINE.

Some new mark, I suppose, of Mr Honeywood's sincerity. But we shall have satisfaction: he shall give me instant satisfaction.

OLIVIA.

It must not be, my Leontine, if you value my esteem or my happiness. Whatever be our fate, let us not add guilt to our misfortunes—Consider that our innocence will shortly be all that we have left us. You must forgive him.

LEONTINE.

Forgive him! Has he not in every instance

betrayed us? Forced to borrow money from him, which appears a mere trick to delay us; promised to keep my father engaged till we were out of danger, and here brought him to the very scene of our escape?

OLIVIA.

Don't be precipitate. We may yet be mistaken.

Enter POSTBOY, *dragging in* JARVIS; HONEYWOOD *entering soon after.*

POSTBOY.

Ay, master, we have him fast enough. Here is the incendiary dog. I'm entitled to the reward; I'll take my oath I saw him ask for the money at the bar, and then run for it.

HONEYWOOD.

Come, bring him along. Let us see him. Let him learn to blush for his crimes. *(Discovering his mistake.)* Death! what's here? Jarvis, Leontine, Olivia! What can all this mean?

JARVIS.

Why, I'll tell you what it means: that I was an old fool, and that you are my master—that's all.

HONEYWOOD.

Confusion!

LEONTINE.

Yes, Sir, I find you have kept your word with me. After such baseness, I wonder how you can venture to see the man you have injured?

HONEYWOOD.

My dear Leontine, by my life, my honour—

LEONTINE.

Peace, peace, for shame; and do not continue to aggravate baseness by hypocrisy. I know you, Sir, I know you.

HONEYWOOD.

Why, won't you hear me? By all that's just, I know not—

LEONTINE.

Hear you, Sir! to what purpose? I now see through all your low arts; your ever complying with every opinion; your never refusing any request: your friendship's as common as a prostitute's favours, and as fallacious; all these, Sir, have long been contemptible to the world, and are now perfectly so to me.

HONEYWOOD.

Ha! contemptible to the world! that reaches me. [*Aside.*

LEONTINE.

All the seeming sincerity of your professions, I now find, were only allurements to betray; and all your seeming regret for their consequences, only calculated to cover the cowardice of your heart. Draw, villain!

Enter CROAKER, *out of breath.*

CROAKER.

Where is the villain? Where is the incendiary? *(Seizing the Postboy.)* Hold him fast, the dog:

he has the gallows in his face. Come, you dog, confess; confess all, and hang yourself.

POSTBOY.

Zounds! master, what do you throttle me for?

CROAKER, *beating him.*

Dog, do you resist? do you resist?

POSTBOY.

Zounds! master, I'm not he; there's the man that we thought was the rogue, and turns out to be one of the company.

CROAKER.

How!

HONEYWOOD.

Mr Croaker, we have all been under a strange mistake here; I find there is nobody guilty; it was all an error; entirely an error of our own.

CROAKER.

And I say, Sir, that you're in an error; for there's guilt and double guilt, a plot, a damned jesuitical, pestilential plot, and I must have proof of it.

HONEYWOOD.

Do but hear me.

CROAKER.

What, you intend to bring 'em off, I suppose? I'll hear nothing.

HONEYWOOD.

Madam, you seem at least calm enough to hear reason.

OLIVIA.

Excuse me.

HONEYWOOD.

Good Jarvis, let me then explain it to you.

JARVIS.

What signifies explanations when the thing is done?

HONEYWOOD.

Will nobody hear me? Was there ever such a set, so blinded by passion and prejudice! *(To the Postboy.)* My good friend, I believe you'll be surprised when I assure you—

POSTBOY.

Sure me nothing—I'm sure of nothing but a good beating.

CROAKER.

Come then you, Madam, if you ever hope for any favour or forgiveness, tell me sincerely all you know of this affair.

OLIVIA.

Unhappily, Sir, I'm but too much the cause of your suspicions: You see before you, Sir, one that with false pretences has stept into your family to betray it; not your daughter—

CROAKER.

Not my daughter!

OLIVIA.

Not your daughter—but a mean deceiver—who —support me, I cannot—

HONEYWOOD.

Help, she's going; give her air.

CROAKER.

Ay, ay, take the young woman to the air; I would not hurt a hair of her head, whose-ever daughter she may be—not so bad as that neither.

[*Exeunt all but* CROAKER.

CROAKER.

Yes, yes, all's out; I now see the whole affair: my son is either married, or going to be so, to this lady, whom he imposed upon me as his sister. Ay, certainly so; and yet I don't find it afflicts me so much as one might think. There's the advantage of fretting away our misfortunes beforehand, we never feel them when they come.

Enter Miss RICHLAND *and* Sir WILLIAM.

Sir WILLIAM.

But how do you know, Madam, that my nephew intends setting off from this place.

Miss RICHLAND.

My maid assured me he was come to this inn, and my own knowledge of his intending to leave the kingdom suggested the rest. But what do I see! my guardian here before us! Who, my dear Sir, could have expected meeting you here? to what accident do we owe this pleasure?

CROAKER.

To a fool, I believe.

Miss RICHLAND.

But to what purpose did you come?

CROAKER.

To play the fool.

Miss RICHLAND.

But with whom?

CROAKER.

With greater fools than myself.

Miss RICHLAND.

Explain.

CROAKER.

Why, Mr Honeywood brought me here, to do nothing, now I am here; and my son is going to be married to I don't know who, that is here: so now you are as wise as I am.

Miss RICHLAND.

Married! to whom, Sir?

CROAKER.

To Olivia, my daughter, as I took her to be; but who the devil she is, or whose daughter she is, I know no more than the man in the moon.

Sir WILLIAM.

Then, Sir, I can inform you; and, though a stranger, yet you shall find me a friend to your family. It will be enough, at present, to assure you, that both in point of birth and fortune the young lady is at least your son's equal. Being left by her father, Sir James Woodville——

CROAKER.

Sir James Woodville! What, of the west?

Sir WILLIAM.

Being left by him, I say, to the care of a mercenary wretch, whose only aim was to secure her fortune to himself, she was sent to France, under pretence of education; and there every art was tried to fix her for life in a convent, contrary to her inclinations. Of this I was informed upon my arrival at Paris; and, as I had been once her father's friend, I did all in my power to frustrate her guardian's base intentions. I had even meditated to rescue her from his authority, when your son stept in with more pleasing violence, gave her liberty, and you a daughter.

CROAKER.

But I intend to have a daughter of my own choosing, Sir. A young lady, Sir, whose fortune, by my interest with those who have interest, will be double what my son has a right to expect. Do you know Mr Lofty, Sir?

Sir WILLIAM.

Yes, Sir; and know that you are deceived in him. But step this way, and I'll convince you.

[CROAKER *and* Sir WILLIAM *seem to confer.*

Enter HONEYWOOD.

HONEYWOOD.

Obstinate man, still to persist in his outrage! Insulted by him, despised by all, I now begin to grow contemptible even to myself. How have I sunk by too great an assiduity to please! How have I over-taxed all my abilities, lest the approbation of a single fool should escape me! But all is now over; I have survived my reputation, my fortune,

my friendships, and nothing remains henceforward for me but solitude and repentance.

Miss Richland.

Is it true, Mr Honeywood, that you are setting off, without taking leave of your friends? The report is, that you are quitting England: Can it be?

Honeywood.

Yes, Madam; and though I am so unhappy as to have fallen under your displeasure, yet, thank Heaven! I leave you to happiness; to one who loves you, and deserves your love; to one who has power to procure you affluence, and generosity to improve your enjoyment of it.

Miss Richland.

And are you sure, Sir, that the gentleman you mean is what you describe him?

Honeywood.

I have the best assurances of it—his serving me. He does indeed deserve the highest happiness, and that is in your power to confer. As for me, weak and wavering as I have been, obliged by all, and incapable of serving any, what happiness can I find but in solitude? what hope, but in being forgotten?

Miss Richland.

A thousand! to live among friends that esteem you, whose happiness it will be to be permitted to oblige you.

Honeywood.

No, Madam, my resolution is fixed. Inferiority among strangers is easy; but among those that once were equals, insupportable. Nay, to shew

you how far my resolution can go, I can now speak with calmness of my former follies, my vanity, my dissipation, my weakness. I will even confess, that, among the number of my other presumptions, I had the insolence to think of loving you. Yes, Madam, while I was pleading the passion of another, my heart was tortured with its own. But it is over; it was unworthy our friendship, and let it be forgotten.

Miss Richland.

You amaze me!

Honeywood.

But you'll forgive it, I know you will; since the confession should not have come from me even now, but to convince you of the sincerity of my intention of—never mentioning it more. [*Going.*

Miss Richland.

Stay, Sir, one moment—Ha! he here—

Enter Lofty.

Lofty.

Is the coast clear? None but friends? I have followed you here with a trifling piece of intelligence; but it goes no farther, things are not yet ripe for a discovery. I have spirits working at a certain board; your affair at the treasury will be done in less than—a thousand years. Mum!

Miss Richland.

Sooner, Sir, I should hope.

Lofty.

Why, yes, I believe it may, if it falls into proper hands, that know where to push and where to

parry; that know how the land lies—eh, Honeywood?

Miss Richland.

It has fallen into yours.

Lofty.

Well, to keep you no longer in suspense, your thing is done. It is done, I say—that's all. I have just had assurances from Lord Neverout, that the claim has been examined, and found admissible. *Quietus* is the word, Madam.

Honeywood.

But how? his lordship has been at Newmarket these ten days.

Lofty.

Indeed! Then Sir Gilbert Goose must have been most damnably mistaken. I had it of him.

Miss Richland.

He! why Sir Gilbert and his family have been in the country this month.

Lofty.

This month! it must certainly be so—Sir Gilbert's letter did come to me from Newmarket, so that he must have met his lordship there; and so it came about. I have his letter about me; I'll read it to you, *(Taking out a large bundle.)* That's from Paoli of Corsica, that from the Marquis of Squilachi.—Have you a mind to see a letter from Count Poniatowski, now King of Poland? —Honest Pon— *(Searching.)* O, Sir, what are you here too? I'll tell you what, honest friend, if you have not absolutely delivered my letter to Sir

William Honeywood, you may return it. The thing will do without him.

Sir William.

Sir, I have delivered it; and must inform you, it was received with the most mortifying contempt.

Croaker.

Contempt! Mr Lofty, what can that mean?

Lofty.

Let him go on, let him go on, I say. You'll find it come to something presently.

Sir William.

Yes, Sir; I believe you'll be amazed, if after waiting some time in the antichamber, after being surveyed with insolent curiosity by the passing servants, I was at last assured, that Sir William Honeywood knew no such person, and I must certainly have been imposed upon.

Lofty.

Good! let me die; very good. Ha! ha! ha!

Croaker.

Now, for my life, I can't find out half the goodness of it.

Lofty.

You can't. Ha! ha!

Croaker.

No, for the soul of me! I think it was as confounded a bad answer as ever was sent from one private gentleman to another.

LOFTY.

And so you can't find out the force of the message? Why, I was in the house at that very time. Ha! ha! It was I that sent that very answer to my own letter. Ha! ha!

CROAKER.

Indeed! How? why?

LOFTY.

In one word, things between Sir William and me must be behind the curtain. A party has many eyes. He sides with Lord Buzzard, I side with Sir Gilbert Goose. So that unriddles the mystery.

CROAKER.

And so it does, indeed; and all my suspicions are over.

LOFTY.

Your suspicions! What, then, you have been suspecting, you have been suspecting, have you? Mr Croaker, you and I were friends; we are friends no longer. Never talk to me. It's over; I say, it's over.

CROAKER.

As I hope for your favour I did not mean to offend. It escaped me. Don't be discomposed.

LOFTY.

Zounds! Sir, but I am discomposed, and will be discomposed. To be treated thus! Who am I? Was it for this I have been dreaded both by ins and outs? Have I been libelled in the Gazetteer, and praised in the St James's? have I been chaired at Wildman's, and a speaker at Merchant-Tailor's

Hall? have I had my hand to addresses, and my head in the print-shops; and talk to me of suspects?

CROAKER.

My dear Sir, be pacified. What can you have but asking pardon?

LOFTY.

Sir, I will not be pacified—Suspects! Who am I? To be used thus! Have I paid court to men in favour to serve my friends; the lords of the treasury, Sir William Honeywood, and the rest of the gang, and talk to me of suspects? Who am I, I say, who am I?

Sir WILLIAM.

Since, Sir, you are so pressing for an answer, I'll tell you who you are:—A gentleman, as well acquainted with politics as with men in power; as well acquainted with persons of fashion as with modesty; with lords of the treasury as with truth; and with all, as you are with Sir William Honeywood. I am Sir William Honeywood. (*Discovering his ensigns of the Bath.*)

CROAKER.

Sir William Honeywood!

HONEYWOOD.

Astonishment! my uncle! (*Aside.*)

LOFTY.

So then, my confounded genius has been all this time only leading me up to the garret, in order to fling me out of the window.

CROAKER.

What, Mr Importance, and are these your works?

Suspect you! You, who have been dreaded by the ins and outs; you, who have had your hand to addresses, and your head stuck up in print-shops. If you were served right, you should have your head stuck up in a pillory.

LOFTY.

Ay, stick it where you will; for, by the Lord, it cuts but a very poor figure where it sticks at present.

Sir WILLIAM.

Well, Mr Croaker, I hope you now see how incapable this gentleman is of serving you, and how little Miss Richland has to expect from his influence.

CROAKER.

Ay, Sir, too well I see it; and I can't but say I have had some boding of it these ten days. So I'm resolved, since my son has placed his affections on a lady of moderate fortune, to be satisfied with his choice, and not run the hazard of another Mr Lofty in helping him to a better.

Sir WILLIAM.

I approve your resolution; and here they come to receive a confirmation of your pardon and consent.

Enter Mrs CROAKER, JARVIS, LEONTINE, *and* OLIVIA.

Mrs CROAKER.

Where's my husband? Come, come, lovey, you must forgive them. Jarvis here has been to tell me the whole affair; and I say, you must forgive hem. Our own was a stolen match, you know,

my dear; and we never had any reason to repent of it.

CROAKER.

I wish we could both say so. However, this gentleman, Sir William Honeywood, has been beforehand with you in obtaining their pardon. So, if the two poor fools have a mind to marry, I think we can tack them together without crossing the Tweed for it. *(Joining their hands.)*

LEONTINE.

How blest and unexpected! What, what can we say to such goodness? But our future obedience shall be the best reply. And as for this gentleman, to whom we owe—

Sir WILLIAM.

Excuse me, Sir, if I interrupt your thanks, as I have here an interest that calls me. *(Turning to* HONEYWOOD.) Yes, Sir, you are surprised to see me; and I own that a desire of correcting your follies led me hither. I saw with indignation the errors of a mind that only sought applause from others; that easiness of disposition which, though inclined to the right, had not courage to condemn the wrong. I saw with regret those splendid errors, that still took name from some neighbouring duty; your charity, that was but injustice; your benevolence, that was but weakness; and your friendship, but credulity. I saw with regret great talents and extensive learning only employed to add sprightliness to error, and increase your perplexities. I saw your mind with a thousand natural charms; but the greatness of its beauty served only to heighten my pity for its prostitution.

HONEYWOOD.

Cease to upbraid me, Sir: I have for some time but too strongly felt the justice of your reproaches. But there is one way still left me. Yes, Sir, I have determined this very hour to quit for ever a place where I have made myself the voluntary slave of all, and to seek among strangers that fortitude which may give strength to the mind, and marshal all its dissipated virtues. Yet ere I depart, permit me to solicit favour for this gentleman; who, notwithstanding what has happened, has laid me under the most signal obligations. Mr Lofty—

LOFTY.

Mr Honeywood, I'm resolved upon a reformation as well as you. I now begin to find that the man who first invented the art of speaking truth, was a much cunninger fellow than I thought him. And to prove that I design to speak truth for the future, I must now assure you, that you owe your late enlargement to another; as, upon my soul, I had no hand in the matter. So now, if any of the company has a mind for preferment, he may take my place; I'm determined to resign. [*Exit.*

HONEYWOOD.

How have I been deceived!

Sir WILLIAM.

No, Sir, you have been obliged to a kinder, fairer friend, for that favour—To Miss Richland. Would she complete our joy, and make the man she has honoured by her friendship happy in her love, I should then forget all, and be as blest as the welfare of my dearest kinsman can make me.

Miss Richland.

After what is past it would be but affectation to pretend to indifference. Yes, I will own an attachment, which I find was more than friendship. And if my entreaties cannot alter his resolution to quit the country, I will even try if my hand has not power to detain him. *(Giving her hand.)*

Honeywood.

Heavens! how can I have deserved all this? How express my happiness, my gratitude? A moment like this overpays an age of apprehension.

Croaker.

Well, now I see content in every face; but Heaven send we be all better this day three months!

Sir William.

Henceforth, nephew, learn to respect yourself. He who seeks only for applause from without, has all his happiness in another's keeping.

Honeywood.

Yes, Sir, I now too plainly perceive my errors; my vanity, in attempting to please all by fearing to offend any; my meanness, in approving folly lest fools should disapprove. Henceforth, therefore, it shall be my study to reserve my pity for real distress; my friendship for true merit; and my love for her, who first taught me what it is to be happy.

EPILOGUE.*

SPOKEN

BY MRS BULKLEY.

As puffing quacks some caitiff wretch procure
To swear the pill, or drop, has wrought a cure ;
Thus, on the stage, our play-wrights still depend
For epilogues and prologues on some friend,
Who knows each art of coaxing up the town,
And make full many a bitter pill go down.
Conscious of this, our bard has gone about,
And teas'd each rhyming friend to help him out.
An epilogue, things can't go on without it ;
It could not fail, would you but set about it.
Young man, cries one, (a bard laid up in clover),
Alas, young man, my writing days are over ;
Let boys play tricks, and kick the straw, not I ;
Your brother Doctor there, perhaps, may try.
What, I ! dear Sir, the Doctor interposes :
What, plant my thistle, Sir, among his roses !
No, no, I've other contests to maintain ;
To-night I head our troops at Warwick-lane.
Go ask your manager—Who, me ! Your pardon ;
Those things are not our forte at Covent Garden.
Our author's friends, thus plac'd at happy distance,
Give him good words indeed, but no assistance.

* The author, in expectation of an Epilogue from a friend at Oxford, deferred writing one himself till the very last hour. What is here offered, owes all its success to the graceful manner of the actress who spoke it.

As some unhappy wight at some new play,
At the pit door stands elbowing away,
While oft, with many a smile, and many a shrug,
He eyes the centre, where his friends sit snug;
His simpering friends, with pleasure in their eyes,
Sink as he sinks, and as he rises rise:
He nods, they nod; he cringes, they grimace;
But not a soul will budge to give him place.
Since then, unhelp'd, our bard must now conform
"To 'bide the pelting of this pit'less storm,"
Blame where you must, be candid where you can,
And be each critic the *Good-Natur'd Man.*

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER;

OR,

THE MISTAKES OF A NIGHT.

A

COMEDY:

AS ACTED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

FIRST PRINTED IN MDCCLXXII.

DEDICATION.

TO

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

DEAR SIR,

BY inscribing this slight performance to you, I do not mean so much to compliment you as myself. It may do me some honour to inform the public, that I have lived many years in intimacy with you. It may serve the interests of mankind also to inform them, that the greatest wit may be found in a character, without impairing the most unaffected piety.

I have, particularly, reason to thank you for your partiality to this performance. The undertaking a Comedy, not merely sentimental, was very dangerous; and Mr Colman, who saw this piece in its various stages, always thought it so. However, I ventured to trust it to the public; and, though it was necessarily delayed till late in the season, I have every reason to be grateful. I am,

DEAR SIR,

Your most sincere Friend and Admirer,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

PROLOGUE

BY

DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

Enter Mr Woodward, *dressed in black, and holding a handkerchief to his eyes.*

Excuse me, Sirs, I pray,—I can't yet speak,—
I'm crying now—and have been all the week.
" 'Tis not alone this mourning suit," good masters:
" I've that within"—for which there are no plasters!
Pray, would you know the reason why I'm crying?
The Comic Muse, long sick, is now a-dying!
And if she goes, my tears will never stop;
For as a player, I can't squeeze out one drop:
I am undone, that's all—shall lose my bread—
I'd rather, but that's nothing—lose my head.
When the sweet maid is laid upon the bier,
Shuter and I shall be chief mourners here.
To her a mawkish drab of spurious breed,
Who deals in sentimentals, will succeed!
Poor Ned and I are dead to all intents;
We can as soon speak Greek as sentiments!
Both nervous grown, to keep our spirits up,
We now and then take down a hearty cup.
What shall we do?—If Comedy forsake us,
They'll turn us out, and no one else will take us.

But why can't I be moral?—Let me try—
My heart thus pressing—fix'd my face and eye—
With a sententious look, that nothing means,
(Faces are blocks in sentimental scenes)
Thus I begin—" All is not gold that glitters,
Pleasures seem sweet, but prove a glass of bitters.
When ign'rance enters, folly is at hand:
Learning is better far than house and land.
Let not your virtue trip; who trips may stumble,
And virtue is not virtue if she tumble."

I give it up—morals won't do for me;
To make you laugh, I must play tragedy.
One hope remains—hearing the maid was ill,
A Doctor comes this night to shew his skill.
To cheer her heart, and give your muscles motion,
He, in Five Draughts prepar'd, presents a potion:
A kind of magic charm—for be assur'd,
If you will swallow it, the maid is cur'd:
But desperate the Doctor, and her case is,
If you reject the dose, and make wry faces!
This truth he boasts, will boast it while he lives,
No pois'nous drugs are mix'd in what he gives.
Should he succeed, you'll give him his degree;
If not, within he will receive no fee!
The college, you, must his pretensions back,
Pronounce him Regular, or dub him Quack.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Sir Charles Marlow	Mr Gardner.
Young Marlow, (his son)	Mr Lewis.
Hardcastle	Mr Shuter.
Hastings	Mr Dubellamy.
Tony Lumpkin	Mr Quick.
Diggory	Mr Saunders.

WOMEN.

Mrs Hardcastle	Mrs Green.
Miss Hardcastle	Mrs Bulkley.
Miss Neville	Mrs Kniveton.
Maid	Miss Willems.

Landlord, Servants, &c. &c.

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER:

OR,

THE MISTAKES OF A NIGHT.

ACT FIRST.

Scene—A Chamber in an old-fashioned House.

Enter Mrs Hardcastle *and* Mr Hardcastle.

Mrs Hardcastle.

I vow, Mr Hardcastle, you're very particular. Is there a creature in the whole country but ourselves, that does not take a trip to town now and then, to rub off the rust a little? There's the two Miss Hoggs, and our neighbour Mrs Grigsby, go to take a month's polishing every winter.

Hardcastle.

Ay, and bring back vanity and affectation to last them the whole year. I wonder why London cannot keep its own fools at home! In my time, the follies of the town crept slowly among us, but now they travel faster than a stage-coach. Its fopperies come down not only as inside passengers, but in the very basket.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Ay, your times were fine times indeed; you have been telling us of them for many a long year. Here we live in an old rumbling mansion, that looks for all the world like an inn, but that we never see company. Our best visitors are old Mrs Oddfish, the curate's wife, and little Cripplegate, the lame dancing-master; and all our entertainment your old stories of Prince Eugene and the Duke of Marlborough. I hate such old-fashioned trumpery.

Hardcastle.

And I love it. I love every thing that's old: old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wines; and, I believe, Dorothy, *(taking her hand)* you'll own I have been pretty fond of an old wife.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Lord, Mr Hardcastle, you're for ever at your Dorothy's and your old wives. You may be a Darby, but I'll be no Joan, I promise you. I'm not so old as you'd make me, by more than one good year. Add twenty to twenty, and make money of that.

Hardcastle.

Let me see; twenty added to twenty makes just fifty and seven.

Mrs Hardcastle.

It's false, Mr Hardcastle; I was but twenty when I was brought to bed of Tony, that I had by Mr Lumpkin, my first husband; and he's not come to years of discretion yet.

Hardcastle.

Nor ever will, I dare answer for him. Ay, you have taught him finely.

Mrs Hardcastle.

No matter. Tony Lumpkin has a good fortune. My son is not to live by his learning. I don't think a boy wants much learning to spend fifteen hundred a-year.

Hardcastle.

Learning, quotha! a mere composition of tricks and mischief.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Humour, my dear; nothing but humour. Come, Mr Hardcastle, you must allow the boy a little humour.

Hardcastle.

I'd sooner allow him a horse-pond. If burning the footman's shoes, frightening the maids, and worrying the kittens be humour, he has it. It was but yesterday he fastened my wig to the back of my chair, and when I went to make a bow, I popt my bald head in Mrs Frizzle's face.

Mrs Hardcastle.

And am I to blame? The poor boy was always too sickly to do any good. A school would be his death. When he comes to be a little stronger, who knows what a year or two's Latin may do for him?

Hardcastle.

Latin for him! A cat and fiddle. No, no; the alehouse and the stable are the only schools he'll ever go to.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Well, we must not snub the poor boy now, for I

believe we shan't have him long among us. Any body that looks in his face may see he's consumptive.

HARDCASTLE.

Ay, if growing too fat be one of the symptoms.

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

He coughs sometimes.

HARDCASTLE.

Yes, when his liquor goes the wrong way.

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

I'm actually afraid of his lungs.

HARDCASTLE.

And truly so am I; for he sometimes whoops like a speaking trumpet—(TONY *hallooing behind the scenes.*)—O, there he goes—a very consumptive figure, truly.

Enter TONY, *crossing the stage.*

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

Tony, where are you going, my charmer? Won't you give papa and I a little of your company, lovee?

TONY.

I'm in haste, mother; I cannot stay.

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

You shan't venture out this raw evening, my dear; you look most shockingly.

TONY.

I can't stay, I tell you. The Three Pigeons ex-

pects me down every moment. There's some fun going forward.

HARDCASTLE.

Ay; the alehouse, the old place; I thought so.

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

A low, paltry set of fellows.

TONY.

Not so low neither. There's Dick Muggins the exciseman, Jack Slang the horse doctor, little Aminidab that grinds the music box, and Tom Twist that spins the pewter platter.

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

Pray, my dear, disappoint them for one night at least.

TONY.

As for disappointing them, I should not so much mind; but I can't abide to disappoint myself.

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

(Detaining him.) You shan't go.

TONY.

I will, I tell you.

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

I say you shan't.

TONY.

We'll see which is strongest, you or I.

[*Exit, hauling her out.*

HARDCASTLE, *solus.*

Ay, there goes a pair that only spoil each

other. But is not the whole age in a combination to drive sense and discretion out of doors? There's my pretty darling Kate! the fashions of the times have almost infected her too. By living a year or two in town, she's as fond of gauze and French frippery as the best of them.

Enter Miss Hardcastle.

Hardcastle.

Blessings on my pretty innocence! drest out as usual, my Kate. Goodness! What a quantity of superfluous silk hast thou got about thee, girl! I could never teach the fools of this age, that the indigent world could be clothed out of the trimmings of the vain.

Miss Hardcastle.

You know our agreement, Sir. You allow me the morning to receive and pay visits, and to dress in my own manner; and in the evening I put on my housewife's dress to please you.

Hardcastle.

Well, remember I insist on the terms of our agreement; and, by the bye, I believe I shall have occasion to try your obedience this very evening.

Miss Hardcastle.

I protest, Sir, I don't comprehend your meaning.

Hardcastle.

Then to be plain with you, Kate, I expect the young gentleman I have chosen to be your husband from town this very day. I have his father's letter, in which he informs me his son is set out, and that he intends to follow himself shortly after.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Indeed! I wish I had known something of this before. Bless me, how shall I behave? It's a thousand to one I shan't like him; our meeting will be so formal, and so like a thing of business, that I shall find no room for friendship or esteem.

HARDCASTLE.

Depend upon it, child, I never will controul your choice; but Mr Marlow, whom I have pitched upon, is the son of my old friend, Sir Charles Marlow, of whom you have heard me talk so often. The young gentleman has been bred a scholar, and is designed for an employment in the service of his country. I am told he's a man of an excellent understanding.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Is he?

HARDCASTLE.

Very generous.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

I believe I shall like him.

HARDCASTLE.

Young and brave.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

I'm sure I shall like him.

HARDCASTLE.

And very handsome.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

My dear papa, say no more, *(kissing his hand)* he's mine; I'll have him.

HARDCASTLE.

And, to crown all, Kate, he's one of the most bashful and reserved young fellows in all the world.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Eh! you have frozen me to death again. That word *reserved* has undone all the rest of his accomplishments. A reserved lover, it is said, always makes a suspicious husband.

HARDCASTLE.

On the contrary, modesty seldom resides in a breast that is not enriched with nobler virtues. It was the very feature in his character that first struck me.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

He must have more striking features to catch me, I promise you. However, if he be so young, so handsome, and so every thing as you mention, I believe he'll do still. I think I'll have him.

HARDCASTLE.

Ay, Kate, but there is still an obstacle. It's more than an even wager he may not have you.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

My dear papa, why will you mortify one so? Well, if he refuses, instead of breaking my heart at his indifference, I'll only break my glass for its flattery, set my cap to some newer fashion, and look out for some less difficult admirer.

HARDCASTLE.

Bravely resolved! In the mean time I'll go prepare the servants for his reception: as we seldom

see company, they want as much training as a company of recruits the first day's muster. [*Exit.*

Miss Hardcastle, *alone.*

Lud, this news of papa's puts me all in a flutter. Young, handsome; these he put last; but I put them foremost. Sensible, good-natured; I like all that. But then reserved and sheepish, that's much against him. Yet can't he be cured of his timidity, by being taught to be proud of his wife? Yes; and can't I—But I vow I'm disposing of the husband, before I have secured the lover.

Enter Miss Neville.

Miss Hardcastle.

I'm glad you're come, Neville, my dear. Tell me, Constance, how do I look this evening? Is there any thing whimsical about me? Is it one of my well looking days, child? am I in face to-day?

Miss Neville.

Perfectly, my dear. Yet now I look again—bless me!—sure no accident has happened among the canary birds or the gold fishes. Has your brother or the cat been meddling? or has the last novel been too moving?

Miss Hardcastle.

No; nothing of all this. I have been threatened—I can scarce get it out—I have been threatened with a lover.

Miss Neville.

And his name—

Miss Hardcastle.

Is Marlow.

Miss Neville.

Indeed!

Miss Hardcastle.

The son of Sir Charles Marlow.

Miss Neville.

As I live, the most intimate friend of Mr Hastings, my admirer. They are never asunder. I believe you must have seen him when we lived in town.

Miss Hardcastle.

Never.

Miss Neville.

He's a very singular character, I assure you. Among women of reputation and virtue he is the modestest man alive; but his acquaintance give him a very different character among creatures of another stamp: you understand me.

Miss Hardcastle.

An odd character indeed. I shall never be able to manage him. What shall I do? Pshaw, think no more of him, but trust to occurrences for success. But how goes on your own affair, my dear? has my mother been courting you for my brother Tony as usual?

Miss Neville.

I have just come from one of our agreeable *tête-à-têtes.* She has been saying a hundred tender things, and setting off her pretty monster as the very pink of perfection.

Miss Hardcastle.

And her partiality is such, that she actually thinks him so. A fortune like yours is no small temptation. Besides, as she has the sole management of it, I'm not surprised to see her unwilling to let it go out of the family.

Miss Neville.

A fortune like mine, which chiefly consists in jewels, is no such mighty temptation. But at any rate, if my dear Hastings be but constant, I make no doubt to be too hard for her at last. However, I let her suppose that I am in love with her son; and she never once dreams that my affections are fixed upon another.

Miss Hardcastle.

My good brother holds out stoutly. I could almost love him for hating you so.

Miss Neville.

It is a good-natured creature at bottom, and I'm sure would wish to see me married to any body but himself. But my aunt's bell rings for our afternoon's walk round the improvements. Allons! Courage is necessary, as our affairs are critical.

Miss Hardcastle.

"Would it were bed-time, and all were well."

[*Exeunt.*

Scene—An Alehouse Room.

Several shabby Fellows with punch and tobacco. Tony at the head of the table, a little higher than the rest, a mallet in his hand.

Omnes.

Hurrea! hurrea! hurrea! bravo!

First Fellow.

Now, gentlemen, silence for a song. The 'Squire is going to knock himself down for a song.

Omnes.

Ay, a song, a song!

Tony.

Then I'll sing you, gentlemen, a song I made upon this alehouse, the Three Pigeons.

SONG.

Let schoolmasters puzzle their brain,
With grammar, and nonsense, and learning,
Good liquor, I stoutly maintain,
Gives *genus* a better discerning.
Let them brag of their heathenish gods,
Their Lethes, their Styxes, and Stygians,
Their qui's, and their quæ's, and their quod's,
They're all but a parcel of pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

When methodist preachers come down,
A-preaching that drinking is sinful,
I'll wager the rascals a crown,
They always preach best with a skinful.
But when you come down with your pence,
For a slice of their scurvy religion,
I'll leave it to all men of sense,
But you, my good friend, are the pigeon.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

Then come put the jorum about,
And let us be merry and clever,
Our hearts and our liquors are stout,
Here's the Three Jolly Pigeons for ever.
Let some cry up woodcock or hare,
Your bustards, your ducks, and your widgeons;
But of all the gay birds in the air,
Here's a health to the Three Jolly Pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

OMNES.

Bravo, bravo!

FIRST FELLOW.

The 'Squire has got spunk in him.

SECOND FELLOW.

I loves to hear him sing, bekeays he never gives us nothing that's low.

THIRD FELLOW.

O damn any thing that's low, I cannot bear it.

FOURTH FELLOW.

The genteel thing is the genteel thing at any time: If so be that a gentleman bees in a concatenation accordingly.

THIRD FELLOW.

I like the maxum of it, Master Muggins. What, though I am obligated to dance a bear, a man may be a gentleman for all that. May this be my poison, if my bear ever dances but to the very genteelest of tunes; "Water Parted," or "The minuet in Ariadne."

SECOND FELLOW.

What a pity it is the 'Squire is not come to his own. It would be well for all the publicans within ten miles round of him.

TONY.

Ecod, and so it would, Master Slang. I'd then shew what it was to keep choice of company.

SECOND FELLOW.

O he takes after his own father for that. To be sure old 'Squire Lumpkin was the finest gentleman I ever set my eyes on. For winding the straight horn, or beating a thicket for a hare, or a wench, he never had his fellow. It was a saying in the place, that he kept the best horses, dogs, and girls, in the whole county.

TONY.

Ecod, and when I'm of age, I'll be no bastard, I promise you. I have been thinking of Bet Bouncer and the miller's grey mare to begin with. But come, my boys, drink about and be merry, for you pay no reckoning. Well, Stingo, what's the matter?

Enter LANDLORD.

LANDLORD.

There be two gentlemen in a post-chaise at the door. They have lost their way upo' the forest; and they are talking something about Mr Hardcastle.

TONY.

As sure as can be, one of them must be the gentleman that's coming down to court my sister. Do they seem to be Londoners?

LANDLORD.

I believe they may. They look woundily like Frenchmen.

TONY.

Then desire them to step this way, and I'll set them right in a twinkling. *(Exit Landlord.)* Gentlemen, as they mayn't be good enough company for you, step down for a moment, and I'll be with you in the squeezing of a lemon. [*Exeunt Mob.*

TONY, *alone.*

Father-in-law has been calling me whelp and hound this half-year. Now if I pleased, I could be so revenged upon the old grumbletonian. But then I'm afraid—afraid of what? I shall soon be worth fifteen hundred a-year, and let him frighten me out of that if he can.

Enter LANDLORD, *conducting* MARLOW *and* HASTINGS.

MARLOW.

What a tedious uncomfortable day have we had of it! We were told it was but forty miles across the country, and we have come above threescore.

HASTINGS.

And all, Marlow, from that unaccountable reserve of yours, that would not let us inquire more frequently on the way.

MARLOW.

I own, Hastings, I am unwilling to lay myself under an obligation to every one I meet, and often stand the chance of an unmannerly answer.

HASTINGS.

At present, however, we are not likely to receive any answer.

TONY.

No offence, gentlemen. But I'm told you have been inquiring for one Mr Hardcastle in these parts. Do you know what part of the country you are in?

HASTINGS.

Not in the least, Sir, but should thank you for information.

TONY.

Nor the way you came?

HASTINGS.

No, Sir; but if you can inform us——

TONY.

Why, gentlemen, if you know neither the road you are going, nor where you are, nor the road you came, the first thing I have to inform you is, that —you have lost your way.

MARLOW.

We wanted no ghost to tell us that.

TONY.

Pray, gentlemen, may I be so bold as to ask the place from whence you came?

MARLOW.

That's not necessary toward directing us where we are to go.

TONY.

No offence; but question for question is all fair, you know.—Pray, gentlemen, is not this same Hardcastle a cross-grained, old-fashioned, whimsi-

cal fellow, with an ugly face; a daughter, and a pretty son?

HASTINGS.

We have not seen the gentleman; but he has the family you mention.

TONY.

The daughter, a tall, trapesing, trolloping, talkative maypole—the son, a pretty, well-bred, agreeable youth, that every body is fond of?

MARLOW.

Our information differs in this. The daughter is said to be well-bred, and beautiful; the son an awkward booby, reared up and spoiled at his mother's apron-string.

TONY.

He-he-hem!—Then, gentlemen, all I have to tell you is, that you won't reach Mr Hardcastle's house this night, I believe.

HASTINGS.

Unfortunate!

TONY.

It's a damn'd long, dark, boggy, dirty, dangerous way. Stingo, tell the gentlemen the way to Mr Hardcastle's! *(Winking upon the Landlord.)* Mr Hardcastle's, of Quagmire Marsh, you understand me.

LANDLORD.

Master Hardcastle's! Lock-a-daisy, my masters, you're come a deadly deal wrong! When you came to the bottom of the hill, you should have crossed down Squash-Lane.

MARLOW.

Cross down Squash-Lane!

LANDLORD.

Then you were to keep straight forward, till you came to four roads.

MARLOW.

Come to where four roads meet!

TONY.

Ay; but you must be sure to take only one of them.

MARLOW.

O, Sir, you're facetious.

TONY.

Then keeping to the right, you are to go sideways, till you come upon Crack-skull common: there you must look sharp for the track of the wheel, and go forward till you come to farmer Murrain's barn. Coming to the farmer's barn, you are to turn to the right, and then to the left, and then to the right about again, till you find out the old mill.

MARLOW.

Zounds, man! we could as soon find out the longitude!

HASTINGS.

What's to be done, Marlow?

MARLOW.

This house promises but a poor reception; though perhaps the landlord can accommodate us.

LANDLORD.

Alack, master, we have but one spare bed in the whole house.

TONY.

And to my knowledge, that's taken up by three lodgers already. *(After a pause, in which the rest seem disconcerted.)* I have hit it. Don't you think, Stingo, our landlady could accommodate the gentlemen by the fire-side, with——three chairs and a bolster?

HASTINGS.

I hate sleeping by the fire-side.

MARLOW.

And I detest your three chairs and a bolster.

TONY.

You do, do you?—then, let me see—what if you go on a mile further, to the Buck's Head; the old Buck's Head on the hill, one of the best inns in the whole county?

HASTINGS.

O ho! so we have escaped an adventure for this night, however.

LANDLORD.

(Apart to Tony.) Sure, you ben't sending them to your father's as an inn, be you?

TONY.

Mum, you fool you. Let them find that out. *(To them.)* You have only to keep on straight forward, till you come to a large old house by the road side. You'll see a pair of large horns over the door.

That's the sign. Drive up the yard, and call stoutly about you.

HASTINGS.

Sir, we are obliged to you. The servants can't miss the way?

TONY.

No, no: but I tell you, though, the landlord is rich, and going to leave off business; so he wants to be thought a gentleman, saving your presence, he! he! he! He'll be for giving you his company; and, ecod, if you mind him, he'll persuade you that his mother was an alderman, and his aunt a justice of peace.

LANDLORD.

A troublesome old blade, to be sure; but a keeps as good wines and beds as any in the whole country.

MARLOW.

Well, if he supplies us with these, we shall want no farther connexion. We are to turn to the right, did you say?

TONY.

No, no; straight forward, I'll just step myself, and shew you a piece of the way. (*To the Landlord.*) Mum!

LANDLORD.

Ah, bless your heart, for a sweet, pleasant—— damn'd mischievous son of a whore. [*Exeunt.*

ACT SECOND.

Scene—An Old-fashioned House.

Enter Hardcastle, *followed by three or four awkward Servants.*

Hardcastle.

Well, I hope you are perfect in the table exercise I have been teaching you these three days. You all know your posts and your places, and can shew that you have been used to good company, without ever stirring from home.

Omnes.

Ay, ay.

Hardcastle.

When company comes, you are not to pop out and stare, and then run in again, like frighted rabbits in a warren.

Omnes.

No, no.

Hardcastle.

You, Diggory, whom I have taken from the barn, are to make a shew at the side-table; and you, Roger, whom I have advanced from the

plough, are to place yourself behind my chair. But you're not to stand so, with your hands in your pockets. Take your hands from your pockets, Roger; and from your head, you blockhead you. See how Diggory carries his hands. They're a little too stiff, indeed, but that's no great matter.

DIGGORY.

Ay, mind how I hold them. I learned to hold my hands this way, when I was upon drill for the militia. And so being upon drill——

HARDCASTLE.

You must not be so talkative, Diggory. You must be all attention to the guests. You must hear us talk, and not think of talking; you must see us drink, and not think of drinking; you must see us eat, and not think of eating.

DIGGORY.

By the laws, your worship, that's parfectly unpossible. Whenever Diggory sees yeating going forward, ecod he's always wishing for a mouthful himself.

HARDCASTLE.

Blockhead! Is not a belly-full in the kitchen as good as a belly-full in the parlour? Stay your stomach with that reflection.

DIGGORY.

Ecod, I thank your worship, I'll make a shift to stay my stomach with a slice of cold beef in the pantry.

HARDCASTLE.

Diggory, you are too talkative.—Then, if I hap-

pen to say a good thing, or tell a good story at table, you must not all burst out a-laughing, as if you made part of the company.

DIGGORY.

Then ecod your worship must not tell the story of old grouse in the gun-room: I can't help laughing at that—he! he! he!—for the soul of me. We have laughed at that these twenty years—ha! ha! ha!

HARDCASTLE.

Ha! ha! ha! The story is a good one. Well, honest Diggory, you may laugh at that—but still remember to be attentive. Suppose one of the company should call for a glass of wine, how will you behave? A glass of wine, Sir, if you please, *(To Diggory)*—Eh, why don't you move?

DIGGORY.

Ecod, your worship, I never have courage till I see the eatables and drinkables brought upo' the table, and then I'm as bauld as a lion.

HARDCASTLE.

What, will nobody move?

FIRST SERVANT.

I'm not to leave this place.

SECOND SERVANT.

I'm sure it's no place of mine.

THIRD SERVANT.

Nor mine, for sartain.

DIGGORY.

Wauns, and I'm sure it canna be mine.

HARDCASTLE.

You numskulls! and so while, like your betters, you are quarrelling for places, the guests must be starved. O you dunces! I find I must begin all over again——But don't I hear a coach drive into the yard? To your posts, you blockheads. I'll go in the mean time and give my old friend's son a hearty reception at the gate.

[*Exit* HARDCASTLE.

DIGGORY.

By the elevens, my place is gone quite out of my head.

ROGER.

I know that my place is to be every-where.

FIRST SERVANT.

Where the devil is mine?

SECOND SERVANT.

My place is to be no-where at all; and so I'ze go about my business. [*Exeunt Servants, running about as if frighted, different ways.*

Enter SERVANT *with candles, shewing in* MARLOW and HASTINGS.

SERVANT.

Welcome, gentlemen, very welcome! This way.

HASTINGS.

After the disappointments of the day, welcome once more, Charles, to the comforts of a clean room and a good fire. Upon my word, a very well-looking house; antique but creditable.

MARLOW.

The usual fate of a large mansion. Having first ruined the master by good house-keeping, it at last comes to levy contributions as an inn.

HASTINGS.

As you say, we passengers are to be taxed to pay all these fineries. I have often seen a good sideboard, or a marble chimney-piece, though not actually put in the bill, inflame a reckoning confoundedly.

MARLOW.

Travellers, George, must pay in all places; the only difference is, that in good inns you pay dearly for luxuries, in bad inns you are fleeced and starved.

HASTINGS.

You have lived very much among them. In truth, I have been often surprised, that you who have seen so much of the world, with your natural good sense, and your many opportunities, could never yet acquire a requisite share of assurance.

MARLOW.

The Englishman's malady. But tell me, George, where could I have learned that assurance you talk of? My life has been chiefly spent in a college or an inn, in seclusion from that lovely part of the creation that chiefly teach men confidence. I don't know that I was ever familiarly acquainted with a single modest woman, except my mother—But among females of another class, you know——

HASTINGS.

Ay, among them you are impudent enough of all conscience.

MARLOW.

They are of *us*, you know.

HASTINGS.

But in the company of women of reputation I never saw such an idiot, such a trembler; you look for all the world as if you wanted an opportunity of stealing out of the room.

MARLOW.

Why, man, that's because I do want to steal out of the room. Faith, I have often formed a resolution to break the ice, and rattle away at any rate. But I don't know how, a single glance from a pair of fine eyes has totally overset my resolution. An impudent fellow may counterfeit modesty, but I'll be hanged if a modest man can ever counterfeit impudence.

HASTINGS.

If you could but say half the fine things to them, that I have heard you lavish upon the bar-maid of an inn, or even a college bed-maker——

MARLOW.

Why, George, I can't say fine things to them; they freeze, they petrify me. They may talk of a comet, or a burning mountain, or some such bagatelle; but to me, a modest woman, drest out in all her finery, is the most tremendous object of the whole creation.

HASTINGS.

Ha! ha! ha! At this rate, man, how can you ever expect to marry?

MARLOW.

Never; unless, as among kings and princes, my bride were to be courted by proxy. If, indeed, like an eastern bridegroom, one were to be introduced to a wife he never saw before, it might be endured. But to go through all the terrors of a formal courtship, together with the episode of aunts, grandmothers, and cousins, and at last to blunt out the broad staring question of, Madam, will you marry me? No, no, that's a strain much above me, I assure you.

HASTINGS.

I pity you. But how do you intend behaving to the lady you are come down to visit at the request of your father?

MARLOW.

As I behave to all other ladies. Bow very low; answer yes or no to all her demands—But for the rest, I don't think I shall venture to look in her face till I see my father's again.

HASTINGS.

I'm surprised that one who is so warm a friend, can be so cool a lover.

MARLOW.

To be explicit, my dear Hastings, my chief inducement down was to be instrumental in forwarding your happiness, not my own. Miss Neville loves you, the family don't know you; as my friend you are sure of a reception, and let honour do the rest.

HASTINGS.

My dear Marlow! But I'll suppress the emo-

tion. Were I a wretch, meanly seeking to carry off a fortune, you should be the last man in the world I would apply to for assistance. But Miss Neville's person is all I ask, and that is mine, both from her deceased father's consent, and her own inclination.

MARLOW.

Happy man! You have talents and art to captivate any woman. I'm doom'd to adore the sex, and yet to converse with the only part of it I despise. This stammer in my address, and this awkward unprepossessing visage of mine, can never permit me to soar above the reach of a milliner's 'prentice, or one of the duchesses of Drury-lane. Pshaw! this fellow here to interrupt us.

Enter HARDCASTLE.

HARDCASTLE.

Gentlemen, once more you are heartily welcome. Which is Mr Marlow? Sir, you are heartily welcome. It's not my way, you see, to receive my friends with my back to the fire. I like to give them a hearty reception in the old style at my gate. I like to see their horses and trunks taken care of.

MARLOW.

(Aside.) He has got our names from the servants already. *(To him.)* We approve your caution and hospitality, Sir. *(To Hastings.)* I have been thinking, George, of changing our travelling dresses in the morning. I am grown confoundedly ashamed of mine.

HARDCASTLE.

I beg, Mr Marlow, you'll use no ceremony in this house.

HASTINGS.

I fancy, Charles, you're right: the first blow is half the battle. I intend opening the campaign with the white and gold.

HARDCASTLE.

Mr Marlow—Mr Hastings—gentlemen—pray be under no restraint in this house. This is Liberty-hall, gentlemen. You may do just as you please here.

MARLOW.

Yet, George, if we open the campaign too fiercely at first, we may want ammunition before it is over. I think to reserve the embroidery to secure a retreat.

HARDCASTLE.

Your talking of a retreat, Mr Marlow, puts me in mind of the Duke of Marlborough, when we went to besiege Denain. He first summoned the garrison——

MARLOW.

Don't you think the *ventre d'or* waistcoat will do with the plain brown?

HARDCASTLE.

He first summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men——

HASTINGS.

I think not: brown and yellow mix but very poorly.

HARDCASTLE.

I say, gentlemen, as I was telling you, he sum-

moned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men——

MARLOW.

The girls like finery.

HARDCASTLE.

Which might consist of about five thousand men, well appointed with stores, ammunition, and other implements of war. Now, says the Duke of Marlborough to George Brooks, that stood next to him —You must have heard of George Brooks—I'll pawn my dukedom, says he, but I take that garrison without spilling a drop of blood. So——

MARLOW.

What, my good friend, if you gave us a glass of punch in the mean time; it would help us to carry on the siege with vigour.

HARDCASTLE.

Punch, Sir! *(Aside.)* This is the most unaccountable kind of modesty I ever met with.

MARLOW.

Yes, Sir, punch. A glass of warm punch, after our journey, will be comfortable. This is Liberty-hall, you know.

HARDCASTLE.

Here's a cup, Sir.

MARLOW.

(Aside.) So this fellow, in his Liberty-hall, will only let us have just what he pleases.

HARDCASTLE.

(Taking the cup.) I hope you'll find it to your

mind. I have prepared it with my own hands, and I believe you'll own the ingredients are tolerable. Will you be so good as to pledge me, Sir? Here, Mr Marlow, here is to our better acquaintance.

(Drinks.)

MARLOW.

(Aside.) A very impudent fellow this! but he's a character, and I'll humour him a little. Sir, my service to you. *(Drinks.)*

HASTINGS.

(Aside.) I see this fellow wants to give us his company, and forgets that he's an innkeeper, before he has learned to be a gentleman.

MARLOW.

From the excellence of your cup, my old friend, I suppose you have a good deal of business in this part of the country. Warm work, now and then, at elections, I suppose.

HARDCASTLE.

No, Sir, I have long given that work over. Since our betters have hit upon the expedient of electing each other, there is no business "for us that sell ale."

HASTINGS.

So, then, you have no turn for politics, I find.

HARDCASTLE.

Not in the least. There was a time, indeed, I fretted myself about the mistakes of government, like other people; but finding myself every day grow more angry, and the government growing no better, I left it to mend itself. Since that, I no more trouble my head about Hyder Ally, or Ally

Cawn, than about Ally Croaker. Sir, my service to you.

HASTINGS.

So that with eating above stairs, and drinking below, with receiving your friends within, and amusing them without, you lead a good pleasant bustling life of it.

HARDCASTLE.

I do stir about a great deal, that's certain. Half the differences of the parish are adjusted in this very parlour.

MARLOW.

(After drinking.) And you have an argument in your cup, old gentleman, better than any in Westminster-hall.

HARDCASTLE.

Ay, young gentleman, that, and a little philosophy.

MARLOW.

(Aside.) Well, this is the first time I ever heard of an innkeeper's philosophy.

HASTINGS.

So then, like an experienced general, you attack them on every quarter. If you find their reason manageable, you attack it with your philosophy; if you find they have no reason, you attack them with this. Here's your health, my philosopher. (*Drinks.*)

HARDCASTLE.

Good, very good, thank you; ha! ha! ha! Your generalship puts me in mind of Prince Eugene, when he fought the Turks at the battle of Belgrade. You shall hear.

MARLOW.

Instead of the battle of Belgrade, I believe it's almost time to talk about supper. What has your philosophy got in the house for supper?

HARDCASTLE.

For supper, Sir! *(Aside.)* Was ever such a request to a man in his own house!

MARLOW.

Yes, Sir, supper, Sir; I begin to feel an appetite. I shall make devilish work to-night in the larder, I promise you.

HARDCASTLE.

(*Aside.*) Such a brazen dog sure never my eyes beheld. (*To him.*) Why really, Sir, as for supper, I can't well tell. My Dorothy and the cook-maid settle these things between them. I leave these kind of things entirely to them.

MARLOW.

You do, do you?

HARDCASTLE.

Entirely. By the bye, I believe they are in actual consultation upon what's for supper this moment in the kitchen.

MARLOW.

Then I beg they'll admit me as one of their privy-council. It's a way I have got. When I travel I always choose to regulate my own supper. Let the cook be called. No offence I hope, Sir?

HARDCASTLE.

O no, Sir, none in the least; yet I don't know

how; our Bridget, the cook-maid, is not very communicative upon these occasions. Should we send for her, she might scold us all out of the house.

HASTINGS.

Let's see your list of the larder then. I ask it as a favour. I always match my appetite to my bill of fare.

MARLOW.

(*To* HARDCASTLE, *who looks at them with surprise.*) Sir, he's very right, and it's my way too.

HARDCASTLE.

Sir, you have a right to command here. Here, Roger, bring us the bill of fare for to-night's supper: I believe it's drawn out.—Your manner, Mr Hastings, puts me in mind of my uncle, colonel Wallop. It was a saying of his, that no man was sure of his supper till he had eaten it.

HASTINGS.

(*Aside.*) All upon the high rope! His uncle a colonel! we shall soon hear of his mother being a justice of the peace. But let's hear the bill of fare.

MARLOW.

(*Perusing.*) What's here? For the first course; for the second course; for the dessert. The devil, Sir, do you think we have brought down the whole joiners' company, or the corporation of Bedford, to eat up such a supper? Two or three little things, clean and comfortable, will do.

HASTINGS.

But let's hear it.

MARLOW.

(*Reading.*) For the first course at the top, a pig, and pruin sauce.

HASTINGS.

Damn your pig, I say.

MARLOW.

And damn your pruin sauce, say I.

HARDCASTLE.

And yet, gentlemen, to men that are hungry, pig with pruin sauce is very good eating.

MARLOW.

At the bottom a calf's tongue and brains.

HASTINGS.

Let your brains be knocked out, my good Sir, I don't like them.

MARLOW.

Or you may clap them on a plate by themselves.

HARDCASTLE.

(*Aside.*) Their impudence confounds me. (*To them.*) Gentlemen, you are my guests, make what alterations you please. Is there any thing else you wish to retrench or alter, gentlemen?

MARLOW.

Item. A pork pye, a boiled rabbit and sausages, a Florentine, a shaking pudding, and a dish of tiff—taff—taffety cream.

HASTINGS.

Confound your made dishes; I shall be as much

at a loss in this house as at a green and yellow dinner at the French ambassador's table. I'm for plain eating.

HARDCASTLE.

I'm sorry, gentlemen, that I have nothing you like, but if there be any thing you have a particular fancy to——

MARLOW.

Why, really, Sir, your bill of fare is so exquisite, that any one part of it is full as good as another. Send us what you please. So much for supper. And now to see that our beds are aired, and properly taken care of.

HARDCASTLE.

I entreat you'll leave all that to me. You shall not stir a step.

MARLOW.

Leave that to you! I protest, Sir, you must excuse me, I always look to these things myself.

HARDCASTLE.

I must insist, Sir, you'll make yourself easy on that head.

MARLOW.

You see I'm resolv'd on it. *(Aside.)* A very troublesome fellow this, as I ever met with.

HARDCASTLE.

Well, Sir, I'm resolved at least to attend you. *(Aside.)* This may be modern modesty, but I never saw any thing look so like old-fashioned impudence. [*Exeunt* MARLOW *and* HARDCASTLE.

HASTINGS, *alone.*

So I find this fellow's civilities begin to grow troublesome. But who can be angry at those assiduities which are meant to please him?—Ha! what do I see? Miss Neville, by all that's happy!

Enter Miss NEVILLE.

Miss NEVILLE.

My dear Hastings! To what unexpected good fortune, to what accident, am I to ascribe this happy meeting?

HASTINGS.

Rather let me ask the same question, as I could never have hoped to meet my dearest Constance at an inn.

Miss NEVILLE.

An inn! sure you mistake: my aunt, my guardian, lives here. What could induce you to think this house an inn?

HASTINGS.

My friend, Mr Marlow, with whom I came down, and I, have been sent here as to an inn, I assure you. A young fellow whom we accidentally met at a house hard by directed us hither.

Miss NEVILLE.

Certainly it must be one of my hopeful cousin's tricks, of whom you have heard me talk so often; ha! ha! ha!

HASTINGS.

He whom your aunt intends for you? he of whom I have such just apprehensions?

Miss Neville.

You have nothing to fear from him, I assure you. You'd adore him if you knew how heartily he despises me. My aunt knows it too, and has undertaken to court me for him, and actually begins to think she has made a conquest.

Hastings.

Thou dear dissembler! You must know, my Constance, I have just seized this happy opportunity of my friend's visit here to get admittance into the family. The horses that carried us down are now fatigued with their journey, but they'll soon be refreshed; and then, if my dearest girl will trust in her faithful Hastings, we shall soon be landed in France, where even among slaves the laws of marriage are respected.

Miss Neville.

I have often told you, that though ready to obey you, I yet should leave my little fortune behind with reluctance. The greatest part of it was left me by my uncle, the India director, and chiefly consists in jewels. I have been for some time persuading my aunt to let me wear them. I fancy I'm very near succeeding. The instant they are put into my possession, you shall find me ready to make them and myself yours.

Hastings.

Perish the baubles! Your person is all I desire. In the mean time, my friend Marlow must not be let into his mistake. I know the strange reserve of his temper is such, that if abruptly informed of it, he would instantly quit the house before our plan was ripe for execution.

Miss Neville.

But how shall we keep him in the deception? Miss Hardcastle is just returned from walking; what if we still continue to deceive him?——This, this way—— [*They confer.*

Enter Marlow.

Marlow.

The assiduities of these good people tease me beyond bearing. My host seems to think it ill manners to leave me alone, and so he claps not only himself but his old-fashioned wife on my back. They talk of coming to sup with us too; and then, I suppose, we are to run the gauntlet through all the rest of the family.—What have we got here?

Hastings.

My dear Charles! Let me congratulate you!—The most fortunate accident!—Who do you think is just alighted?

Marlow.

Cannot guess.

Hastings.

Our mistresses, boy, Miss Hardcastle and Miss Neville. Give me leave to introduce Miss Constance Neville to your acquaintance. Happening to dine in the neighbourhood, they called on their return to take fresh horses here. Miss Hardcastle has just stept into the next room, and will be back in an instant. Wasn't it lucky? eh!

Marlow.

(Aside.) I have been mortified enough of all

conscience, and here comes something to complete my embarrassment.

HASTINGS.

Well, but wasn't it the most fortunate thing in the world?

MARLOW.

Oh! yes. Very fortunate—a most joyful encounter—But our dresses, George, you know are in disorder—What if we should postpone the happiness till to-morrow?—To-morrow at her own house—It will be every bit as convenient—and rather more respectful—To morrow let it be.

[*Offering to go.*

Miss NEVILLE.

By no means, Sir. Your ceremony will displease her. The disorder of your dress will shew the ardour of your impatience. Besides, she knows you are in the house, and will permit you to see her.

MARLOW.

O! the devil! how shall I support it?—Hem! hem! Hastings, you must not go. You are to assist me, you know. I shall be confoundedly ridiculous. Yet, hang it! I'll take courage. Hem!

HASTINGS.

Pshaw, man! it's but the first plunge, and all's over. She's but a woman, you know.

MARLOW.

And of all women, she that I dread most to encounter.

Enter Miss Hardcastle, *as returned from walking.*

Hastings.

(*Introducing them.*) Miss Hardcastle. Mr Marlow. I'm proud of bringing two persons of such merit together, that only want to know, to esteem each other.

Miss Hardcastle.

(*Aside.*) Now for meeting my modest gentleman with a demure face, and quite in his own manner. (*After a pause, in which he appears very uneasy and disconcerted.*) I'm glad of your safe arrival, Sir.—I'm told you had some accidents by the way.

Marlow.

Only a few, Madam. Yes, we had some. Yes, Madam, a good many accidents, but should be sorry—Madam—or rather glad of any accidents—that are so agreeably concluded. Hem!

Hastings.

(*To him.*) You never spoke better in your whole life. Keep it up, and I'll insure you the victory.

Miss Hardcastle.

I'm afraid you flatter, Sir. You that have seen so much of the finest company, can find little entertainment in an obscure corner of the country.

Marlow.

(*Gathering courage.*) I have lived, indeed, in the world, Madam; but I have kept very little company. I have been but an observer upon life, Madam, while others were enjoying it.

Miss Neville.

But that, I am told, is the way to enjoy it at last.

Hastings.

(*To him.*) Cicero never spoke better. Once more, and you are confirmed in assurance for ever.

Marlow.

(*To him.*) Hem! stand by me then, and when I'm down, throw in a word or two to set me up again.

Miss Hardcastle.

An observer, like you, upon life were, I fear, disagreeably employed, since you must have had much more to censure than to approve.

Marlow.

Pardon me, Madam. I was always willing to be amused. The folly of most people is rather an object of mirth than uneasiness.

Hastings.

(*To him.*) Bravo, bravo. Never spoke so well in your whole life. Well, Miss Hardcastle, I see that you and Mr Marlow are going to be very good company. I believe our being here will but embarrass the interview.

Marlow.

Not in the least, Mr Hastings. We like your company of all things. (*To him.*) Zounds! George, sure you won't go? how can you leave us?

HASTINGS.

Our presence will but spoil conversation, so we'll retire to the next room. *(To him.)* You don't consider, man, that we are to manage a little *tête-à-tête* of our own. [*Exeunt.*

Miss HARDCASTLE.

(*After a pause.*) But you have not been wholly an observer, I presume, Sir: the ladies, I should hope, have employed some part of your addresses.

MARLOW.

(*Relapsing into timidity.*) Pardon me, Madam, I —I—I—as yet have studied—only—to—deserve them.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

And that, some say, is the very worst way to obtain them.

MARLOW.

Perhaps so, Madam. But I love to converse only with the more grave and sensible part of the sex.—But I'm afraid I grow tiresome.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Not at all, Sir; there is nothing I like so much as grave conversation myself; I could hear it for ever. Indeed I have often been surprised how a man of sentiment could ever admire those light airy pleasures, where nothing reaches the heart.

MARLOW.

It's——a disease——of the mind, Madam. In the variety of tastes there must be some who, wanting a relish——for——um—a—um.

Miss Hardcastle.

I understand you, Sir. There must be some who, wanting a relish for refined pleasures, pretend to despise what they are incapable of tasting.

Marlow.

My meaning, Madam, but infinitely better expressed. And I can't help observing——a——

Miss Hardcastle.

(*Aside.*) Who could ever suppose this fellow impudent upon such occasions! (*To him.*) You were going to observe, Sir——

Marlow.

I was observing, Madam—I protest, Madam, I forget what I was going to observe.

Miss Hardcastle.

(*Aside.*) I vow and so do I. (*To him.*) You were observing, Sir, that in this age of hypocrisy—something about hypocrisy, Sir.

Marlow.

Yes, Madam. In this age of hypocrisy there are few who upon strict inquiry do not—a—a—a—

Miss Hardcastle.

I understand you perfectly, Sir.

Marlow.

(*Aside*) Egad! and that's more than I do myself.

Miss Hardcastle.

You mean that in this hypocritical age there are few that do not condemn in public what they prac-

tise in private, and think they pay every debt to virtue when they praise it.

MARLOW.

True, Madam; those who have most virtue in their mouths, have least of it in their bosoms. But I'm sure I tire you, Madam.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Not in the least, Sir; there's something so agreeable and spirited in your manner, such life and force—pray, Sir, go on.

MARLOW.

Yes, Madam. I was saying——that there are some occasions—when a total want of courage, Madam, destroys all the——and puts us——upon a—a—a—

Miss HARDCASTLE.

I agree with you entirely; a want of courage upon some occasions assumes the appearance of ignorance, and betrays us when we most want to excel. I beg you'll proceed.

MARLOW.

Yes, Madam. Morally speaking, Madam—But I see Miss Neville expecting us in the next room. I would not intrude for the world.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

I protest, Sir, I never was more agreeably entertained in all my life. Pray go on.

MARLOW.

Yes, Madam, I was——But she beckons us to join her. Madam, shall I do myself the honour to attend you?

Miss Hardcastle.

Well then, I'll follow.

Marlow.

(Aside.) This pretty smooth dialogue has done for me. [*Exit.*

Miss Hardcastle, *alone.*

Ha! ha! ha! Was there ever such a sober sentimental interview? I'm certain he scarce looked in my face the whole time. Yet the fellow, but for his unaccountable bashfulness, is pretty well too. He has good sense, but then so buried in his fears, that it fatigues one more than ignorance. If I could teach him a little confidence, it would be doing somebody that I know of a piece of service. But who is that somebody?—That, faith, is a question I can scarce answer. [*Exit.*

Enter Tony *and* Miss Neville, *followed by* Mrs Hardcastle *and* Hastings.

Tony.

What do you follow me for, Cousin Con? I wonder you're not ashamed to be so very engaging.

Miss Neville.

I hope, cousin, one may speak to one's own relations, and not be to blame.

Tony.

Ay, but I know what sort of a relation you want to make me though; but it won't do. I tell you Cousin Con, it won't do; so I beg you'll keep your distance, I want no nearer relationship.

[*She follows, coquetting him to the back scene.*

Mrs Hardcastle.

Well! I vow, Mr Hastings, you are very entertaining. There is nothing in the world I love to talk of so much as London, and the fashions, though I was never there myself.

Hastings.

Never there! You amaze me! From your air and manner, I concluded you had been bred all your life either at Ranelagh, St James's, or Tower Wharf.

Mrs Hardcastle.

O! Sir, you're only pleased to say so. We country persons can have no manner at all. I'm in love with the town, and that serves to raise me above some of our neighbouring rustics; but who can have a manner, that has never seen the Pantheon, the Grotto Gardens, the Borough, and such places where the nobility chiefly resort? All I can do is to enjoy London at second-hand. I take care to know every *tête-à-tête* from the scandalous magazine, and have all the fashions, as they come out, in a letter from the two Miss Rickets of Crooked-Lane. Pray how do you like this head, Mr Hastings?

Hastings.

Extremely elegant and degagée, upon my word, Madam. Your friseur is a Frenchman, I suppose?

Mrs Hardcastle.

I protest, I dressed it myself from a print in the ladies' memorandum-book for the last year.

Hastings.

Indeed! Such a head in a side-box at the play-

house would draw as many gazers as my Lady Mayoress at a city ball.

Mrs Hardcastle.

I vow, since inoculation began, there is no such thing to be seen as a plain woman; so one must dress a little particular, or one may escape in the crowd.

Hastings.

But that can never be your case, Madam, in any dress. (*Bowing.*)

Mrs Hardcastle.

Yet, what signifies my dressing when I have such a piece of antiquity by my side as Mr Hardcastle: all I can say will never argue down a single button from his clothes. I have often wanted him to throw off his great flaxen wig, and where he was bald, to plaster it over, like my Lord Pately, with powder.

Hastings.

You are right, Madam; for, as among the ladies there are none ugly, so among the men there are none old.

Mrs Hardcastle.

But what do you think his answer was? Why, with his usual Gothic vivacity, he said I only wanted him to throw off his wig to convert it into a *tête* for my own wearing.

Hastings.

Intolerable! At your age you may wear what you please, and it must become you.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Pray, Mr Hastings, what do you take to be the most fashionable age about town?

HASTINGS.

Some time ago, forty was all the mode; but I'm told the ladies intend to bring up fifty for the ensuing winter.

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

Seriously. Then I shall be too young for the fashion.

HASTINGS.

No lady begins now to put on jewels till she's past forty. For instance, Miss there, in a polite circle, would be considered as a child, as a mere maker of samplers.

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

And yet Mrs Niece thinks herself as much a woman, and is as fond of jewels as the oldest of us all.

HASTINGS.

Your niece, is she? And that young gentleman, a brother of your's, I should presume?

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

My son, Sir. They are contracted to each other. Observe their little sports. They fall in and out ten times a-day, as if they were man and wife already. *(To them.)* Well, Tony, child, what soft things are you saying to your cousin Constance this evening?

TONY.

I have been saying no soft things; but that it's very hard to be followed about so. Ecod! I've not a place in the house now that's left to myself, but the stable.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Never mind him, Con, my dear, he's in another story behind your back.

Miss Neville.

There's something generous in my cousin's manner. He falls out before faces to be forgiven in private.

Tony.

That's a damned confounded—crack.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Ah! he's a sly one. Don't you think they're like each other about the mouth, Mr Hastings? The Blenkinsop mouth to a T. They're of a size too. Back to back, my pretties, that Mr Hastings may see you. Come, Tony.

Tony.

You had as good not make me, I tell you. (*Measuring*).

Miss Neville.

O lud! he has almost cracked my head.

Mrs Hardcastle.

O, the monster! For shame, Tony. You a man, and behave so!

Tony.

If I'm a man, let me have my fortin. Ecod! I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Is this, ungrateful boy, all that I'm to get for the pains I have taken in your education? I that

have rocked you in your cradle, and fed that pretty mouth with a spoon! Did not I work that waistcoat to make you genteel? Did not I prescribe for you every day, and weep while the receipt was operating?

Tony.

Ecod! you had reason to weep, for you have been dosing me ever since I was born. I have gone through every receipt in the complete housewife ten times over; and you have thoughts of coursing me through Quincey next spring. But, ecod! I tell you, I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Wasn't it all for your good, viper? Wasn't it all for your good?

Tony.

I wish you'd let me and my good alone, then. Snubbing this way when I'm in spirits. If I'm to have any good, let it come of itself; not to keep dinging it, dinging it into one so.

Mrs Hardcastle.

That's false; I never see you when you're in spirits. No, Tony, you then go to the alehouse or kennel. I'm never to be delighted with your agreeable wild notes, unfeeling monster!

Tony.

Ecod! mamma, your own notes are the wildest of the two.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Was ever the like? But I see he wants to break my heart; I see he does.

HASTINGS.

Dear Madam, permit me to lecture the young gentleman a little. I'm certain I can persuade him to his duty.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

Well, I must retire. Come, Constance, my love. You see, Mr Hastings, the wretchedness of my situation: was ever poor woman so plagued with a dear, sweet, pretty, provoking, undutiful boy?

[*Exeunt* MRS HARDCASTLE *and* Miss NEVILLE.

HASTINGS, TONY.

TONY, *singing*.

"There was a young man riding by, and fain would have his will. Rang do didlo dee."—— Don't mind her. Let her cry. It's the comfort of her heart. I have seen her and sister cry over a book for an hour together; and they said they liked the book the better the more it made them cry.

HASTINGS.

Then you're no friend to the ladies, I find, my pretty young gentleman?

TONY.

That's as I find 'um.

HASTINGS.

Not to her of your mother's choosing, I dare answer? And yet she appears to me a pretty well-tempered girl.

TONY.

That's because you don't know her so well as

I. Ecod! I know every inch about her; and there's not a more bitter cantackerous toad in all Christendom.

HASTINGS.

(*Aside.*) Pretty encouragement this for a lover!

TONY.

I have seen her since the height of that. She has as many tricks as a hare in a thicket, or a colt the first day's breaking.

HASTINGS.

To me she appears sensible and silent.

TONY.

Ay, before company. But when she's with her play-mate, she's as loud as a hog in a gate.

HASTINGS.

But there is a meek modesty about her that charms me.

TONY.

Yes, but curb her never so little, she kicks up, and you're flung in a ditch.

HASTINGS.

Well, but you must allow her a little beauty.—Yes, you must allow her some beauty.

TONY.

Bandbox! She's all a made-up thing, mum. Ah! could you but see Bet Bouncer of these parts, you might then talk of beauty. Ecod, she has two eyes as black as sloes, and cheeks as broad and red as a pulpit cushion. She'd make two of she.

HASTINGS.

Well, what say you to a friend that would take this bitter bargain off your hands?

TONY.

Anon.

HASTINGS.

Would you thank him that would take Miss Neville, and leave you to happiness and your dear Betsy?

TONY.

Ay; but where is there such a friend, for who would take her?

HASTINGS.

I am he. If you but assist me, I'll engage to whip her off to France, and you shall never hear more of her.

TONY.

Assist you! Ecod I will, to the last drop of my blood. I'll clap a pair of horses to your chaise that shall trundle you off in a twinkling, and maybe get you a part of her fortin beside in jewels that you little dream of.

HASTINGS.

My dear 'Squire, this looks like a lad of spirit.

TONY.

Come along, then, and you shall see more of my spirit before you have done with me. (*Singing.*)

We are the boys
That fears no noise
Where the thundering cannons roar.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THIRD.

Enter HARDCASTLE, *alone.*

HARDCASTLE.

WHAT could my old friend Sir Charles mean by recommending his son as the modestest young man in town? To me he appears the most impudent piece of brass that ever spoke with a tongue. He has taken possession of the easy chair by the fire-side already. He took off his boots in the parlour, and desired me to see them taken care of. I'm desirous to know how his impudence affects my daughter.—She will certainly be shocked at it.

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE, *plainly dressed.*

HARDCASTLE.

Well, my Kate, I see you have changed your dress, as I bid you; and yet, I believe, there was no great occasion.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

I find such a pleasure, Sir, in obeying your commands, that I take care to observe them without ever debating their propriety.

HARDCASTLE.

And yet, Kate, I sometimes give you some cause, particularly when I recommended my modest gentleman to you as a lover to-day.

Miss Hardcastle.

You taught me to expect something extraordinary, and I find the original exceeds the description.

Hardcastle.

I was never so surprised in my life! He has quite confounded all my faculties!

Miss Hardcastle.

I never saw any thing like it: and a man of the world too!

Hardcastle.

Ay, he learned it all abroad—what a fool was I, to think a young man could learn modesty by travelling. He might as soon learn wit at a masquerade.

Miss Hardcastle.

It seems all natural to him.

Hardcastle.

A good deal assisted by bad company and a French dancing-master.

Miss Hardcastle.

Sure you mistake, papa! A French dancing-master could never have taught him that timid look—that awkward address—that bashful manner—

Hardcastle.

Whose look? whose manner, child?

Miss Hardcastle.

Mr Marlow's: his *mauvaise honte*, his timidity, struck me at the first sight.

HARDCASTLE.

Then your first sight deceived you; for I think him one of the most brazen first sights that ever astonished my senses.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Sure, Sir, you rally! I never saw any one so modest.

HARDCASTLE.

And can you be serious? I never saw such a bouncing, swaggering puppy since I was born. Bully Dawson was but a fool to him.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Surprising! He met me with a respectful bow, a stammering voice, and a look fixed on the ground.

HARDCASTLE.

He met me with a loud voice, a lordly air, and a familiarity that made my blood freeze again.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

He treated me with diffidence and respect; censured the manners of the age; admired the prudence of girls that never laughed; tired me with apologies for being tiresome; then left the room with a bow, and "Madam, I would not for the world detain you."

HARDCASTLE.

He spoke to me as if he knew me all his life before; asked twenty questions, and never waited for an answer; interrupted my best remarks with some silly pun; and when I was in my best story of the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene, he asked if I had not a good hand at making punch.

Yes, Kate, he asked your father if he was a maker of punch!

Miss Hardcastle.

One of us must certainly be mistaken.

Hardcastle.

If he be what he has shewn himself, I'm determined he shall never have my consent.

Miss Hardcastle.

And if he be the sullen thing I take him, he shall never have mine.

Hardcastle.

In one thing then we are agreed—to reject him.

Miss Hardcastle.

Yes: But upon conditions. For if you should find him less impudent, and I more presuming; if you find him more respectful, and I more importunate—I don't know—the fellow is well enough for a man—Certainly we don't meet many such at a horse-race in the country.

Hardcastle.

If we should find him so——But that's impossible. The first appearance has done my business. I'm seldom deceived in that.

Miss Hardcastle.

And yet there may be many good qualities under that first appearance.

Hardcastle.

Ay, when a girl finds a fellow's outside to her taste, she then sets about guessing the rest of his

furniture. With her, a smooth face stands for good sense, and a genteel figure for every virtue.

Miss Hardcastle.

I hope, Sir, a conversation begun with a compliment to my good sense, won't end with a sneer at my understanding?

Hardcastle.

Pardon me, Kate. But if young Mr Brazen can find the art of reconciling contradictions, he may please us both, perhaps.

Miss Hardcastle.

And as one of us must be mistaken, what if we go to make farther discoveries?

Hardcastle.

Agreed. But depend on't I'm in the right.

Miss Hardcastle.

And depend on't I'm not much in the wrong.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Tony, *running in with a casket.*

Tony.

Ecod! I have got them. Here they are. My cousin Con's necklaces, bobs and all. My mother shan't cheat the poor souls out of their fortin neither. O! my genus, is that you?

Enter Hastings.

Hastings.

My dear friend, how have you managed with your mother? I hope you have amused her with pretending love for your cousin, and that you are

willing to be reconciled at last? Our horses will be refreshed in a short time, and we shall soon be ready to set off.

TONY.

And here's something to bear your charges by the way, (*giving the casket*); your sweetheart's jewels. Keep them; and hang those, I say, that would rob you of one of them.

HASTINGS.

But how have you procured them from your mother?

TONY.

Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no fibs. I procured them by the rule of thumb. If I had not a key to every drawer in mother's bureau, how could I go to the alehouse so often as I do? An honest man may rob himself of his own at any time.

HASTINGS.

Thousands do it every day. But to be plain with you, Miss Neville is endeavouring to procure them from her aunt this very instant. If she succeeds, it will be the most delicate way at least of obtaining them.

TONY.

Well, keep them, till you know how it will be. But I know how it will be well enough, she'd as soon part with the only sound tooth in her head.

HASTINGS.

But I dread the effects of her resentment, when she finds she has lost them.

TONY.

Never you mind her resentment, leave me to manage that. I don't value her resentment the bounce of a cracker. Zounds! here they are. Morice! Prance!

[*Exit* HASTINGS.

TONY, MRS HARDCASTLE, *and* MISS NEVILLE.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

Indeed, Constance, you amaze me. Such a girl as you want jewels! It will be time enough for jewels, my dear, twenty years hence, when your beauty begins to want repairs.

MISS NEVILLE.

But what will repair beauty at forty, will certainly improve it at twenty, Madam.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

Yours, my dear, can admit of none. That natural blush is beyond a thousand ornaments. Besides, child, jewels are quite out at present. Don't you see half the ladies of our acquaintance, my lady Kill-day-light, and Mrs Crump, and the rest of them, carry their jewels to town, and bring nothing but paste and marcasites back.

MISS NEVILLE.

But who knows, madam, but somebody that shall be nameless would like me best with all my little finery about me?

MRS HARDCASTLE.

Consult your glass, my dear, and then see if with such a pair of eyes you want any better sparklers. What do you think, Tony, my dear? does your

cousin Con want any jewels in your eyes to set off her beauty?

TONY.

That's as thereafter may be.

Miss NEVILLE.

My dear aunt, if you knew how it would oblige me.

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

A parcel of old-fashioned rose and table cut things. They would make you look like the court of King Solomon at a puppet-shew. Besides, I believe, I can't readily come at them. They may be missing, for aught I know to the contrary.

TONY.

(Apart to Mrs Hardcastle.) Then why don't you tell her so at once, as she's so longing for them? Tell her they're lost. It's the only way to quiet her. Say they're lost, and call me to bear witness.

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

(*Apart to Tony.*) You know, my dear, I'm only keeping them for you. So if I say they're gone, you'll bear me witness, will you? He! he! he!

TONY.

Never fear me. Ecod! I'll say I saw them taken out with my own eyes.

Miss NEVILLE.

I desire them but for a day, Madam. Just to be permitted to shew them as relics, and then they may be locked up again.

Mrs Hardcastle.

To be plain with you, my dear Constance, if I could find them you should have them. They're missing, I assure you. Lost, for aught I know; but we must have patience wherever they are.

Miss Neville.

I'll not believe it; this is but a shallow pretence to deny me. I know they are too valuable to be so slightly kept, and as you are to answer for the loss—

Mrs Hardcastle.

Don't be alarmed, Constance. If they be lost, I must restore an equivalent. But my son knows they are missing, and not to be found.

Tony.

That I can bear witness to. They are missing, and not to be found; I'll take my oath on't.

Mrs Hardcastle.

You must learn resignation, my dear; for though we lose our fortune, yet we should not lose our patience. See me, how calm I am.

Miss Neville.

Ay, people are generally calm at the misfortunes of others.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Now I wonder a girl of your good sense should waste a thought upon such trumpery. We shall soon find them; and in the mean time you shall make use of my garnets till your jewels be found.

Miss Neville.

I detest garnets.

Miss Hardcastle.

The most becoming things in the world to set off a clear complexion. You have often seen how well they look upon me: You shall have them.

[*Exit.*

Miss Neville.

I dislike them of all things. You shan't stir.—Was ever any thing so provoking, to mislay my own jewels, and force me to wear her trumpery.

Tony.

Don't be a fool. If she gives you the garnets, take what you can get. The jewels are your own already. I have stolen them out of her bureau, and she does not know it. Fly to your spark, he'll tell you more of the matter. Leave me to manage her.

Miss Neville.

My dear cousin!

Tony.

Vanish. She's here, and has missed them already. [*Exit* Miss Neville.] Zounds! how she fidgets and spits about like a catherine wheel.

Enter Mrs Hardcastle.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Confusion! thieves! robbers! we are cheated, plundered, broke open, undone.

TONY.

What's the matter, what's the matter, mamma? I hope nothing has happened to any of the good family?

MRS HARDCASTLE.

We are robbed. My bureau has been broken open, the jewels taken out, and I'm undone.

TONY.

Oh! is that all? Ha! ha! ha! By the laws, I never saw it better acted in my life. Ecod, I thought you was ruined in earnest, ha! ha! ha!

MRS HARDCASTLE.

Why, boy, I'm ruined in earnest. My bureau has been broken open, and all taken away.

TONY.

Stick to that: ha! ha! ha! stick to that. I'll bear witness, you know; call me to bear witness.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

I tell you, Tony, by all that's precious, the jewels are gone, and I shall be ruined for ever.

TONY.

Sure I know they are gone, and I'm to say so.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

My dearest Tony, but hear me. They're gone, I say.

TONY.

By the laws, mamma, you make me for to laugh, ha! ha! I know who took them well enough, ha! ha! ha!

Mrs Hardcastle.

Was there ever such a blockhead, that can't tell the difference between jest and earnest? I tell you I'm not in jest, booby.

Tony.

That's right, that's right: you must be in a bitter passion, and then nobody will suspect either of us. I'll bear witness that they are gone.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Was there ever such a cross-grained brute, that won't hear me? Can you bear witness that you're no better than a fool? Was ever poor woman so beset with fools on one hand, and thieves on the other?

Tony.

I can bear witness to that.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Bear witness again, you blockhead you, and I'll turn you out of the room directly. My poor niece, what will become of her! Do you laugh, you unfeeling brute, as if you enjoyed my distress?

Tony.

I can bear witness to that.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Do you insult me, monster? I'll teach you to vex your mother, I will.

Tony.

I can bear witness to that. *(He runs off, she follows him.)*

Enter Miss Hardcastle *and* Maid.

Miss Hardcastle.

What an unaccountable creature is that brother of mine, to send them to the house as an inn, ha! ha! I don't wonder at his impudence.

Maid.

But what is more, Madam, the young gentleman, as you passed by in your present dress, asked me if you were the bar-maid? He mistook you for the bar-maid, Madam.

Miss Hardcastle.

Did he? Then as I live I'm resolved to keep up the delusion. Tell me, Pimple, how do you like my present dress? Don't you think I look something like Cherry in the Beaux Stratagem?

Maid.

It's the dress, Madam, that every lady wears in the country, but when she visits or receives company.

Miss Hardcastle.

And are you sure he does not remember my face or person?

Maid.

Certain of it.

Miss Hardcastle.

I vow I thought so; for though we spoke for some time together, yet his fears were such that he never once looked up during the interview. Indeed, if he had, my bonnet would have kept him from seeing me.

MAID.

But what do you hope from keeping him in his mistake?

Miss HARDCASTLE.

In the first place, I shall be seen, and that is no small advantage to a girl who brings her face to market. Then I shall perhaps make an acquaintance, and that's no small victory gained over one who never addresses any but the wildest of our sex. But my chief aim is to take my gentleman off his guard, and, like an invisible champion of romance, examine the giant's force before I offer to combat.

MAID.

But are you sure you can act your part, and disguise your voice so that he may mistake that, as he has already mistaken your person?

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Never fear me. I think I have got the true bar cant—Did your honour call?—Attend the Lion there.—Pipes and tobacco for the Angel.—The Lamb has been outrageous this half hour.

MAID.

It will do, Madam. But he's here. [*Exit* MAID.

Enter MARLOW.

MARLOW.

What a bawling in every part of the house. I have scarce a moment's repose. If I go to the best room, there I find my host and his story: If I fly to the gallery, there we have my hostess with

her courtesy down to the ground. I have at last got a moment to myself, and now for recollection. (*Walks and muses.*)

Miss Hardcastle.

Did you call, Sir? Did your honour call?

Marlow.

(*Musing*) As for Miss Hardcastle, she's too grave and sentimental for me.

Miss Hardcastle.

Did your honour call? (*She still places herself before him, he turning away.*)

Marlow.

No, child, (*musing*). Besides, from the glimpse I had of her, I think she squints.

Miss Hardcastle.

I'm sure, Sir, I heard the bell ring.

Marlow.

No, no, (*musing*). I have pleased my father, however, by coming down, and I'll to-morrow please myself by returning. (*Taking out his tablets, and perusing.*)

Miss Hardcastle.

Perhaps the other gentleman called, Sir?

Marlow.

I tell you, no.

Miss Hardcastle.

I should be glad to know, Sir. We have such a parcel of servants!

MARLOW.

No, no, I tell you, (*looks full in her face*). Yes, child, I think I did call. I wanted—I wanted—I vow, child, you are vastly handsome.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

O la, Sir, you'll make one ashamed.

MARLOW.

Never saw a more sprightly malicious eye. Yes, yes, my dear, I did call. Have you got any of your—a—what d'ye call it in the house?

Miss HARDCASTLE.

No, Sir; we have been out of that these ten days.

MARLOW.

One may call in this house, I find, to very little purpose. Suppose I should call for a taste, just by way of trial, of the nectar of your lips; perhaps I might be disappointed in that too.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Nectar! nectar! That's a liquor there's no call for in these parts. French, I suppose. We keep no French wines here, Sir.

MARLOW.

Of true English growth, I assure you.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Then it's odd I should not know it. We brew all sorts of wines in this house, and I have lived here these eighteen years.

MARLOW.

Eighteen years! Why one would think, child,

you kept the bar before you was born. How old are you?

Miss Hardcastle.

O! Sir, I must not tell my age. They say women and music should never be dated.

Marlow.

To guess at this distance you can't be much above forty, (*approaching*). Yet nearer I don't think so much, (*approaching*). By coming close to some women, they look younger still; but when we come very close indeed—(*attempting to kiss her*).

Miss Hardcastle.

Pray, Sir, keep your distance. One would think you wanted to know one's age as they do horses, by mark of mouth.

Marlow.

I protest, child, you use me extremely ill. If you keep me at this distance, how is it possible you and I can ever be acquainted?

Miss Hardcastle.

And who wants to be acquainted with you? I want no such acquaintance, not I. I'm sure you did not treat Miss Hardcastle that was here awhile ago in this obstropalous manner. I'll warrant me, before her you looked dashed, and kept bowing to the ground, and talked, for all the world, as if you was before a Justice of Peace.

Marlow.

(*Aside.*) Egad, she has hit it, sure enough! (*To her.*) In awe of her, child? Ha! ha! ha! A mere awkward squinting thing; no, no. I find

you don't know me. I laughed and rallied her a little; but I was unwilling to be too severe. No, I could not be too severe, curse me!

Miss Hardcastle.

O! then, Sir, you are a favourite, I find, among the ladies?

Marlow.

Yes, my dear, a great favourite. And yet, hang me, I don't see what they find in me to follow. At the ladies' club in town I'm called their agreeable Rattle. Rattle, child, is not my real name, but one I'm known by. My name is Solomons; Mr Solomons, my dear, at your service. (*Offering to salute her.*)

Miss Hardcastle.

Hold, Sir, you are introducing me to your club, not to yourself. And you're so great a favourite there, you say?

Marlow.

Yes, my dear. There's Mrs Mantrap, Lady Betty Blackleg, the Countess of Sligo, Mrs Langhorns, old Miss Biddy Buckskin, and your humble servant, keep up the spirit of the place.

Miss Hardcastle.

Then it is a very merry place, I suppose?

Marlow.

Yes, as merry as cards, supper, wine, and old women can make us.

Miss Hardcastle.

And their agreeable Rattle, ha! ha! ha!

MARLOW.

(*Aside.*) Egad! I don't quite like this chit. She looks knowing, methinks. You laugh, child?

Miss HARDCASTLE.

I can't but laugh to think what time they all have for minding their work or their family.

MARLOW.

(*Aside.*) All's well; she don't laugh at me. (*To her.*) Do you ever work, child?

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Ay, sure. There's not a screen or a quilt in the whole house but what can bear witness to that.

MARLOW.

Odso! then you must shew me your embroidery. I embroider and draw patterns myself a little. If you want a judge of your work, you must apply to me. (*Seizing her hand.*)

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Ay, but the colours do not look well by candle-light. You shall see all in the morning. (*Struggling.*)

MARLOW.

And why not now, my angel? Such beauty fires beyond the power of resistance.—Pshaw! the father here! My old luck: I never nicked seven that I did not throw ames ace three times following.

[*Exit* MARLOW.

Enter HARDCASTLE, *who stands in surprise.*

HARDCASTLE.

So, Madam. So I find this is your modest lover. This is your humble admirer, that kept his eyes fixed on the ground, and only adored at humble distance. Kate, Kate, art thou not ashamed to deceive your father so?

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Never trust me, dear papa, but he's still the modest man I first took him for; you'll be convinced of it as well as I.

HARDCASTLE.

By the hand of my body, I believe his impudence is infectious! Didn't I see him seize your hand? Didn't I see him haul you about like a milk-maid? And now you talk of his respect and his modesty, forsooth!

Miss HARDCASTLE.

But if I shortly convince you of his modesty, that he has only the faults that will pass off with time, and the virtues that will improve with age, I hope you'll forgive him.

HARDCASTLE.

The girl would actually make one run mad! I tell you I'll not be convinced. I am convinced. He has scarce been three hours in the house, and he has already encroached on all my prerogatives. You may like his impudence, and call it modesty; but my son-in-law, Madam, must have very different qualifications.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Sir, I ask but this night to convince you.

HARDCASTLE.

You shall not have half the time, for I have thoughts of turning him out this very hour.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Give me that hour then, and I hope to satisfy you.

HARDCASTLE.

Well, an hour let it be then. But I'll have no trifling with your father. All fair and open, do you mind me.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

I hope, Sir, you have ever found that I considered your commands as my pride; for your kindness is such, that my duty as yet has been inclination. [*Exeunt.*

ACT FOURTH.

Enter HASTINGS *and* Miss NEVILLE.

HASTINGS.

You surprise me: Sir Charles Marlow expected here this night! Where have you had your information?

Miss NEVILLE.

You may depend upon it. I just saw his letter to Mr Hardcastle, in which he tells him he intends setting out a few hours after his son.

HASTINGS.

Then, my Constance, all must be completed before he arrives. He knows me; and should he find me here, would discover my name, and perhaps my designs, to the rest of the family.

Miss NEVILLE.

The jewels, I hope, are safe?

HASTINGS.

Yes, yes. I have sent them to Marlow, who keeps the keys of our baggage. In the mean time I'll go to prepare matters for our elopement. I have had the 'Squire's promise of a fresh pair of horses; and if I should not see him again, will write him farther directions. [*Exit.*

Miss Neville.

Well! success attend you. In the mean time I'll go amuse my aunt with the old pretence of a violent passion for my cousin. [*Exit.*

Enter Marlow, *followed by a Servant.*

Marlow.

I wonder what Hastings could mean by sending me so valuable a thing as a casket to keep for him, when he knows the only place I have is the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door. Have you deposited the casket with the landlady, as I ordered you? Have you put it into her own hands?

Servant.

Yes, your honour.

Marlow.

She said she'd keep it safe, did she?

Servant.

Yes, she said she'd keep it safe enough; she asked me how I came by it? and she said she had a great mind to make me give an account of myself. [*Exit Servant.*

Marlow.

Ha! ha! ha! They're safe, however. What an unaccountable set of beings have we got amongst! This little bar-maid though runs in my head most strangely, and drives out the absurdities of all the rest of the family. She's mine, she must be mine, or I'm greatly mistaken.

Enter HASTINGS.

HASTINGS.

Bless me! I quite forgot to tell her that I intended to prepare at the bottom of the garden. Marlow here, and in spirits too!

MARLOW.

Give me joy, George! Crown me, shadow me with laurels! Well, George, after all, we modest fellows don't want for success among the women.

HASTINGS.

Some women, you mean. But what success has your honour's modesty been crowned with now, that it grows so insolent upon us?

MARLOW.

Didn't you see the tempting, brisk, lovely, little thing, that runs about the house with a bunch of keys to its girdle?

HASTINGS.

Well, and what then?

MARLOW.

She's mine, you rogue you. Such fire, such motion, such eyes, such lips—but, egad! she would not let me kiss them though.

HASTINGS.

But are you so sure, so very sure of her?

MARLOW.

Why, man, she talked of shewing me her work above stairs, and I am to approve the pattern.

HASTINGS.

But how can you, Charles, go about to rob a woman of her honour?

MARLOW.

Pshaw! pshaw! We all know the honour of the bar-maid of an inn. I don't intend to rob her, take my word for it; there's nothing in this house I shan't honestly pay for.

HASTINGS.

I believe the girl has virtue.

MARLOW.

And if she has, I should be the last man in the world that would attempt to corrupt it.

HASTINGS.

You have taken care, I hope, of the casket I sent you to lock up? It's in safety?

MARLOW.

Yes, yes. It's safe enough. I have taken care of it. But how could you think the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door a place of safety? Ah! numskull! I have taken better precautions for you than you did for yourself——I have——

HASTINGS.

What?

MARLOW.

I have sent it to the landlady to keep for you.

HASTINGS.

To the landlady!

MARLOW.

The landlady.

HASTINGS.

You did?

MARLOW.

I did. She's to be answerable for its forthcoming, you know.

HASTINGS.

Yes, she'll bring it forth with a witness.

MARLOW.

Wasn't I right? I believe you'll allow that I acted prudently upon this occasion.

HASTINGS.

(*Aside.*) He must not see my uneasiness.

MARLOW.

You seem a little disconcerted though, methinks. Sure nothing has happened?

HASTINGS.

No, nothing. Never was in better spirits in all my life. And so you left it with the landlady, who, no doubt, very readily undertook the charge.

MARLOW.

Rather too readily. For she not only kept the casket, but, through her great precaution, was going to keep the messenger too. Ha! ha! ha!

HASTINGS.

He! he! he! They're safe, however.

MARLOW.

As a guinea in a miser's purse.

HASTINGS.

(*Aside.*) So now all hopes of fortune are at an end, and we must set off without it. (*To him.*) Well, Charles, I'll leave you to your meditations on the pretty bar-maid, and, he! he! he! may you be as successful for yourself, as you have been for me! [*Exit.*

MARLOW.

Thank ye, George: I ask no more. Ha! ha! ha!

Enter HARDCASTLE.

HARDCASTLE.

I no longer know my own house. It's turned all topsy-turvy. His servants have got drunk already. I'll bear it no longer; and yet, from my respect for his father, I'll be calm. (*To him.*) Mr Marlow, your servant. I'm your very humble servant. (*Bowing low.*)

MARLOW.

Sir, your humble servant. (*Aside.*) What's to be the wonder now?

HARDCASTLE.

I believe, Sir, you must be sensible, Sir, that no man alive ought to be more welcome than your father's son, Sir. I hope you think so?

MARLOW.

I do from my soul, Sir. I don't want much entreaty. I generally make my father's son welcome wherever he goes.

HARDCASTLE.

I believe you do, from my soul, Sir. But though I say nothing to your own conduct, that of your servants is insufferable. Their manner of drinking is setting a very bad example in this house, I assure you.

MARLOW.

I protest, my very good Sir, that is no fault of mine. If they don't drink as they ought, they are to blame. I ordered them not to spare the cellar. I did, I assure you. (*To the side-scene.*) Here, let one of my servants come up. (*To him.*) My positive directions were, that as I did not drink myself, they should make up for my deficiencies below.

HARDCASTLE.

Then they had your orders for what they do? I'm satisfied!

MARLOW.

They had, I assure you. You shall hear from one of themselves.

Enter SERVANT, *drunk.*

MARLOW.

You, Jeremy! Come forward, sirrah! What were my orders? Were you not told to drink freely, and call for what you thought fit, for the good of the house?

HARDCASTLE.

(*Aside.*) I begin to lose my patience.

JEREMY.

Please your honour, liberty and Fleet-street for

ever! Though I'm but a servant, I'm as good as another man. I'll drink for no man before supper, Sir, damme! Good liquor will sit upon a good supper, but a good supper will not sit upon—— hiccup——upon my conscience, Sir.

MARLOW.

You see, my old friend, the fellow is as drunk as he can possibly be. I don't know what you'd have more, unless you'd have the poor devil soused in a beer-barrel.

HARDCASTLE.

Zounds! he'll drive me distracted, if I contain myself any longer. Mr Marlow. Sir; I have submitted to your insolence for more than four hours, and I see no likelihood of its coming to an end. I'm now resolved to be master here, Sir, and I desire that you and your drunken pack may leave my house directly.

MARLOW.

Leave your house!——Sure you jest, my good friend! What? when I'm doing what I can to please you.

HARDCASTLE.

I tell you, Sir, you don't please me; so I desire you'll leave my house.

MARLOW.

Sure you cannot be serious? at this time o' night, and such a night? You only mean to banter me.

HARDCASTLE.

I tell you, Sir, I'm serious! and now that my passions are roused, I say this house is mine, Sir;

this house is mine, and I command you to leave it directly.

MARLOW.

Ha! ha! ha! A puddle in a storm. I shan't stir a step, I assure you. *(In a serious tone.)* This your house, fellow! It's my house. This is my house. Mine, while I chuse to stay. What right have you to bid me leave this house, Sir? I never met with such impudence, curse me; never in my whole life before.

HARDCASTLE.

Nor I, confound me if ever I did. To come to my house, to call for what he likes, to turn me out of my own chair, to insult the family, to order his servants to get drunk, and then to tell me, "This house is mine, Sir." By all that's impudent it makes me laugh. Ha! ha! ha! Pray, Sir, *(bantering)* as you take the house, what think you of taking the rest of the furniture? There's a pair of silver candlesticks, and there's a fire-screen, and there's a pair of brazen-nosed bellows; perhaps you may take a fancy to them.

MARLOW.

Bring me your bill, Sir; bring me your bill, and let's make no more words about it.

HARDCASTLE.

There are a set of prints, too. What think you of the Rake's Progress, for your own apartment?

MARLOW.

Bring me your bill, I say; and I'll leave you and your infernal house directly.

HARDCASTLE.

Then there's a mahogany table that you may see your own face in.

MARLOW.

My bill, I say.

HARDCASTLE.

I had forgot the great chair for your own particular slumbers, after a hearty meal.

MARLOW.

Zounds! bring me my bill, I say, and let's hear no more on't.

HARDCASTLE.

Young man, young man, from your father's letter to me, I was taught to expect a well-bred modest man as a visitor here, but now I find him no better than a coxcomb and a bully; but he will be down here presently, and shall hear more of it. [*Exit.*

MARLOW.

How's this! Sure I have not mistaken the house. Every thing looks like an inn; the servants cry coming; the attendance is awkward; the barmaid too to attend us. But she's here, and will farther inform me. Whither so fast, child? A word with you.

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Let it be short, then. I'm in a hurry. *(Aside.)* I believe he begins to find out his mistake. But it's too soon quite to undeceive him.

MARLOW.

Pray, child, answer me one question. What are you, and what may your business in this house be?

Miss HARDCASTLE.

A relation of the family, Sir.

MARLOW.

What, a poor relation?

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Yes, Sir; a poor relation, appointed to keep the keys, and to see that the guests want nothing in my power to give them.

MARLOW.

That is, you act as bar-maid of this inn.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Inn! O la——what brought that in your head? One of the best families in the county keep an inn—Ha! ha! ha! old Mr Hardcastle's house an inn!

MARLOW.

Mr Hardcastle's house. Is this Mr Hardcastle's house, child?

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Ay, sure. Whose else should it be?

MARLOW.

So then, all's out, and I have been damnably imposed on. O, confound my stupid head, I shall be laughed at over the whole town. I shall be stuck up in caricatura in all the print-shops. The *Dullissimo-Maccaroni*. To mistake this house of all others for an inn, and my father's old friend for an

innkeeper! What a swaggering puppy must he take me for? What a silly puppy do I find myself? There, again, may I be hang'd, my dear, but I mistook you for the bar-maid.

Miss Hardcastle.

Dear me! dear me! I'm sure there's nothing in my behaviour to put me upon a level with one of that stamp.

Marlow.

Nothing, my dear, nothing. But I was in for a list of blunders, and could not help making you a subscriber. My stupidity saw every thing the wrong way. I mistook your assiduity for assurance, and your simplicity for allurement. But it's over—This house I no more show my face in.

Miss Hardcastle.

I hope, Sir, I have done nothing to disoblige you. I'm sure I should be sorry to affront any gentleman who has been so polite, and said so many civil things to me. I'm sure I should be sorry *(pretending to cry)* if he left the family upon my account. I'm sure I should be sorry, people said any thing amiss, since I have no fortune but my character.

Marlow.

(Aside.) By Heaven! she weeps. This is the first mark of tenderness I ever had from a modest woman, and it touches me. (*To her.*) Excuse me, my lovely girl; you are the only part of the family I leave with reluctance. But to be plain with you, the difference of our birth, fortune, and education, makes an honourable connexion impossible; and I can never harbour a thought of seducing simplicity that trusted in my honour, of

bringing ruin upon one, whose only fault was being too lovely.

Miss Hardcastle.

(*Aside.*) Generous man! I now begin to admire him. (*To him.*) But I am sure my family is as good as Miss Hardcastle's; and though I'm poor, that's no great misfortune to a contented mind; and, until this moment, I never thought that it was bad to want fortune.

Marlow.

And why now, my pretty simplicity?

Miss Hardcastle.

Because it puts me at a distance from one, that if I had a thousand pounds, I would give it all to.

Marlow.

(*Aside.*) This simplicity bewitches me, so that if I stay, I'm undone. I must make one bold effort, and leave her. (*To her.*) Your partiality in my favour, my dear, touches me most sensibly; and were I to live for myself alone, I could easily fix my choice. But I owe too much to the opinion of the world, too much to the authority of a father; so that—I can scarcely speak it—it affects me. Farewell. [*Exit.*

Miss Hardcastle.

I never knew half his merit till now. He shall not go, if I have power or art to detain him. I'll still preserve the character in which I *stooped to conquer*, but will undeceive my papa, who, perhaps, may laugh him out of his resolution. [*Exit.*

Enter Tony, Miss Neville.

Tony.

Ay, you may steal for yourselves the next time. I have done my duty. She has got the jewels again, that's a sure thing; but she believes it was all a mistake of the servants.

Miss Neville.

But, my dear cousin, sure you won't forsake us in this distress? If she in the least suspects that I am going off, I shall certainly be locked up, or sent to my aunt Pedigree's, which is ten times worse.

Tony.

To be sure, aunts of all kinds are damned bad things. But what can I do? I have got you a pair of horses that will fly like Whistle-jacket; and I'm sure you can't say but I have courted you nicely before her face. Here she comes, we must court a bit or two more, for fear she should suspect us. (*They retire, and seem to fondle.*)

Enter Mrs Hardcastle.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Well, I was greatly fluttered to be sure. But my son tells me it was all a mistake of the servants. I shan't be easy, however, till they are fairly married, and then let her keep her own fortune. But what do I see? fondling together, as I'm alive. I never saw Tony so sprightly before. Ah! have I caught you, my pretty doves? What, billing, exchanging stolen glances and broken murmurs? Ah!

TONY.

As for murmurs, mother, we grumble a little now and then to be sure. But there's no love lost between us.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

A mere sprinkling, Tony, upon the flame, only to make it burn brighter.

MISS NEVILLE.

Cousin Tony promises to give us more of his company at home. Indeed, he shan't leave us any more. It won't leave us, cousin Tony, will it?

TONY.

O! it's a pretty creature. No, I'd sooner leave my horse in a pound, than leave you when you smile upon one so. Your laugh makes you so becoming.

MISS NEVILLE.

Agreeable cousin! Who can help admiring that natural humour, that pleasant, broad, red, thoughtless, *(patting his cheek)* ah! it's a bold face.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

Pretty innocence!

TONY.

I'm sure I always loved cousin Con's hazle eyes, and her pretty long fingers, that she twists this way and that over the haspicolls, like a parcel of bobbins.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

Ah, he would charm the bird from the tree. I was never so happy before. My boy takes after

his father, poor Mr Lumpkin, exactly. The jewels, my dear Con, shall be yours incontinently. You shall have them. Isn't he a sweet boy, my dear? You shall be married to-morrow, and we'll put off the rest of his education, like Dr Drowsy's sermons, to a fitter opportunity.

Enter DIGGORY.

DIGGORY.

Where's the 'Squire? I have got a letter for your worship.

TONY.

Give it to my mamma. She reads all my letters first.

DIGGORY.

I had orders to deliver it into your own hands.

TONY.

Who does it come from?

DIGGORY.

Your worship mun ask that o' the letter itself.

TONY.

I could wish to know though, (*turning the letter and gazing on it.*)

Miss NEVILLE.

(*Aside.*) Undone! undone! A letter to him from Hastings. I know the hand. If my aunt sees it, we are ruined for ever. I'll keep her employed a little if I can. (*To Mrs Hardcastle.*) But I have not told you, Madam, of my cousin's smart answer just now to Mr Marlow. We so laughed—You must know, Madam—This way a little, for he must not hear us. (*They confer.*)

TONY.

(*Still gazing.*) A damned cramp piece of penmanship, as ever I saw in my life. I can read your print hand very well. But here there are such handles, and shanks, and dashes, that one can scarce know the head from the tail. "To Anthony Lumpkin, esquire." It's very odd, I can read the outside of my letters, where my own name is, well enough. But when I come to open it, it's all—— buzz. That's hard, very hard; for the inside of the letter is always the cream of the correspondence.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

Ha! ha! ha! Very well, very well. And so my son was too hard for the philosopher.

MISS NEVILLE.

Yes, Madam; but you must hear the rest, Madam. A little more this way, or he may hear us. You'll hear how he puzzled him again.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

He seems strangely puzzled now himself, methinks.

TONY.

(*Still gazing.*) A damned up and down hand, as if it was disguised in liquor. (*Reading.*) Dear Sir,—Ay, that's that. Then there's an M, and a T, and an S, but whether the next be an izzard, or an R, confound me, I cannot tell.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

What's that, my dear? Can I give you any assistance?

Miss Neville.

Pray, aunt, let me read it. Nobody reads a cramp hand better than I. *(Twitching the letter from him.)* Do you know who it is from?

Tony.

Can't tell, except from Dick Ginger the feeder.

Miss Neville.

Ay, so it is, *(pretending to read.)* Dear 'Squire, hoping that you're in health, as I am at this present. The gentlemen of the Shake-bag club has cut the gentlemen of the Goose-green quite out of feather. The odds——um——odd battle—um—long fighting—um—here, here, it's all about cocks and fighting; it's of no consequence, here, put it up, put it up. *(Thrusting the crumpled letter upon him.)*

Tony.

But I tell you, Miss, it's of all the consequence in the world. I would not lose the rest of it for a guinea. Here, mother, do you make it out. Of no consequence! (*Giving* Mrs Hardcastle *the letter.*)

Mrs Hardcastle.

How's this! (*reads*) "Dear 'Squire, I'm now waiting for Miss Neville, with a post-chaise and pair, at the bottom of the garden, but I find my horses yet unable to perform the journey. I expect you'll assist us with a pair of fresh horses, as you promised. Dispatch is necessary, as the hag (ay, the hag) your mother, will otherwise suspect us. Yours, Hastings." Grant me patience: I shall run distracted! My rage chokes me.

Miss Neville.

I hope, Madam, you'll suspend your resentment for a few moments, and not impute to me any impertinence, or sinister design, that belongs to another.

Mrs Hardcastle.

(*Courtesying very low.*) Fine spoken Madam, you are most miraculously polite and engaging, and quite the very pink of courtesy and circumspection, Madam. (*Changing her tone.*) And you, you great ill-fashioned oaf, with scarce sense enough to keep your mouth shut: Were you, too, joined against me? But I'll defeat all your plots in a moment. As for you, Madam, since you have got a pair of fresh horses ready, it would be cruel to disappoint them. So, if you please, instead of running away with your spark, prepare, this very moment, to run off with me. Your old aunt Pedigree will keep you secure, I'll warrant me. You too, Sir, may mount your horse, and guard us upon the way. Here, Thomas, Roger, Diggory! I'll show you, that I wish you better than you do yourselves. [*Exit.*

Miss Neville.

So now I'm completely ruined.

Tony.

Ay, that's a sure thing.

Miss Neville.

What better could be expected from being connected with such a stupid fool, and after all the nods and signs I made him?

Tony.

By the laws, Miss, it was your own cleverness,

and not my stupidity, that did your business. You were so nice and so busy with your Shake-bags and Goose-greens, that I thought you could never be making believe.

Enter HASTINGS.

HASTINGS.

So, Sir, I find by my servant, that you have shown my letter, and betrayed us. Was this well done, young gentleman?

TONY.

Here's another. Ask Miss there, who betrayed you? Ecod, it was her doing, not mine.

Enter MARLOW.

MARLOW.

So I have been finely used here among you. Rendered contemptible, driven into ill-manners, despised, insulted, laughed at.

TONY.

Here's another. We shall have old Bedlam broke loose presently.

Miss NEVILLE.

And there, Sir, is the gentleman to whom we all owe every obligation.

MARLOW.

What can I say to him? a mere boy, an idiot, whose ignorance and age are a protection.

HASTINGS.

A poor contemptible booby, that would but disgrace correction.

Miss Neville.

Yet with cunning and malice enough to make himself merry with all our embarrassments.

Hastings.

An insensible cub.

Marlow.

Replete with tricks and mischief.

Tony.

Baw! dam'me, but I'll fight you both, one after the other——with baskets.

Marlow.

As for him, he's below resentment. But your conduct, Mr Hastings, requires an explanation: You knew of my mistakes, yet would not undeceive me.

Hastings.

Tortured as I am with my own disappointments, is this a time for explanations? It is not friendly, Mr Marlow.

Marlow.

But, Sir——

Miss Neville.

Mr Marlow, we never kept on your mistake, till it was too late to undeceive you.

Enter Servant.

Servant.

My mistress desires you'll get ready immediately, Madam. The horses are putting to. Your hat and

things are in the next room. We are to go thirty miles before morning. [*Exit* SERVANT.

MISS NEVILLE.

Well, well: I'll come presently.

MARLOW.

(*To Hastings.*) Was it well done, Sir, to assist in rendering me ridiculous? To hang me out for the scorn of all my acquaintance? Depend upon it, Sir, I shall expect an explanation.

HASTINGS.

Was it well done, Sir, if you're upon that subject, to deliver what I intrusted to yourself, to the care of another, Sir?

MISS NEVILLE.

Mr Hastings. Mr Marlow. Why will you increase my distress by this groundless dispute? I implore, I entreat you——

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Your cloak, Madam. My mistress is impatient. [*Exit* SERVANT.

MISS NEVILLE.

I come. Pray be pacified. If I leave you thus, I shall die with apprehension.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Your fan, muff, and gloves, Madam. The horses are waiting.

Miss Neville.

O, Mr Marlow, if you knew what a scene of constraint and ill-nature lies before me, I am sure it would convert your resentment into pity.

Marlow.

I'm so distracted with a variety of passions, that I don't know what I do. Forgive me, Madam. George, forgive me. You know my hasty temper, and should not exasperate it.

Hastings.

The torture of my situation is my only excuse.

Miss Neville.

Well, my dear Hastings, if you have that esteem for me that I think, that I am sure you have, your constancy for three years will but increase the happiness of our future connexion. If——

Mrs Hardcastle.

(Within.) Miss Neville. Constance, why Constance, I say.

Miss Neville.

I'm coming. Well, constancy, remember, constancy is the word. [*Exit.*

Hastings.

My heart! how can I support this? To be so near happiness, and such happiness!

Marlow.

(To Tony.) You see now, young gentleman, the effects of your folly. What might be amusement to you, is here disappointment, and even distress.

TONY.

(*From a reverie.*) Ecod, I have hit it: it's here. Your hands. Yours and yours, my poor Sulky.—My boots there, ho!—Meet me two hours hence at the bottom of the garden; and if you don't find Tony Lumpkin a more good-natured fellow than you thought for, I'll give you leave to take my best horse, and Bet Bouncer into the bargain. Come along. My boots, ho! [*Exeunt.*

ACT FIFTH.

Enter HASTINGS *and* SERVANT.

HASTINGS.

You saw the old lady and Miss Neville drive off, you say?

SERVANT.

Yes, your honour. They went off in a post-coach, and the young 'Squire went on horseback. They're thirty miles off by this time.

HASTINGS.

Then all my hopes are over.

SERVANT.

Yes, Sir. Old Sir Charles is arrived. He and the old gentleman of the house have been laughing at Mr Marlow's mistake this half hour. They are coming this way.

HASTINGS.

Then I must not be seen. So now to my fruitless appointment at the bottom of the garden. This is about the time.

Enter Sir CHARLES *and* HARDCASTLE.

HARDCASTLE.

Ha! ha! ha! The peremptory tone in which he sent forth his sublime commands!

Sir Charles.

And the reserve with which I suppose he treated all your advances.

Hardcastle.

And yet he might have seen something in me above a common innkeeper, too.

Sir Charles.

Yes, Dick, but he mistook you for an uncommon innkeeper; ha! ha! ha!

Hardcastle.

Well, I'm in too good spirits to think of any thing but joy. Yes, my dear friend, this union of our families will make our personal friendships hereditary, and though my daughter's fortune is but small——

Sir Charles.

Why, Dick, will you talk of fortune to me? My son is possessed of more than a competence already, and can want nothing but a good and virtuous girl to share his happiness, and increase it. If they like each other, as you say they do——

Hardcastle.

If, man! I tell you they do like each other. My daughter as good as told me so.

Sir Charles.

But girls are apt to flatter themselves, you know.

Hardcastle.

I saw him grasp her hand in the warmest manner myself; and here he comes to put you out of your *ifs*, I warrant him.

Enter MARLOW.

MARLOW.

I come, Sir, once more, to ask pardon for my strange conduct. I can scarce reflect on my insolence without confusion.

HARDCASTLE.

Tut, boy, a trifle. You take it too gravely. An hour or two's laughing with my daughter will set all to rights again. She'll never like you the worse for it.

MARLOW.

Sir, I shall be always proud of her approbation.

HARDCASTLE.

Approbation is but a cold word, Mr Marlow; if I am not deceived, you have something more than approbation thereabouts. You take me?

MARLOW.

Really, Sir, I have not that happiness.

HARDCASTLE.

Come, boy, I'm an old fellow, and know what's what as well as you that are younger. I know what has past between you; but mum.

MARLOW.

Sure, Sir, nothing has past between us but the most profound respect on my side, and the most distant reserve on her's. You don't think, Sir, that my impudence has been past upon all the rest of the family?

HARDCASTLE.

Impudence! No, I don't say that—not quite

impudence—though girls like to be played with, and rumpled a little too sometimes. But she has told no tales, I assure you.

MARLOW.

I never gave her the slightest cause.

HARDCASTLE.

Well, well, I like modesty in its place well enough. But this is over-acting, young gentleman. You may be open. Your father and I will like you the better for it.

MARLOW.

May I die, Sir, if I ever——

HARDCASTLE.

I tell you, she don't dislike you; and as I'm sure you like her——

MARLOW.

Dear Sir—I protest, Sir——

HARDCASTLE.

I see no reason why you should not be joined as fast as the parson can tie you.

MARLOW.

But hear me, Sir——

HARDCASTLE.

Your father approves the match, I admire it; every moment's delay will be doing mischief, so—

MARLOW.

But why won't you hear me? By all that's just and true, I never gave Miss Hardcastle the slightest mark of my attachment, or even the most dis-

tant hint to suspect me of affection. We had but one interview, and that was formal, modest, and uninteresting.

HARDCASTLE.

(*Aside.*) This fellow's formal modest impudence is beyond bearing.

Sir CHARLES.

And you never grasped her hand, or made any protestations?

MARLOW.

As Heaven is my witness, I came down in obedience to your commands; I saw the lady without emotion, and parted without reluctance. I hope you'll exact no farther proofs of my duty, nor prevent me from leaving a house in which I suffer so many mortifications. [*Exit.*

Sir CHARLES.

I'm astonished at the air of sincerity with which he parted.

HARDCASTLE.

And I'm astonished at the deliberate intrepidity of his assurance.

Sir CHARLES.

I dare pledge my life and honour upon his truth.

HARDCASTLE.

Here comes my daughter, and I would stake my happiness upon her veracity.

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE.

HARDCASTLE.

Kate, come hither, child. Answer us sincerely

and without reserve: has Mr Marlow made you any professions of love and affection?

Miss Hardcastle.

The question is very abrupt, Sir! But since you require unreserved sincerity, I think he has.

Hardcastle.

(*To Sir Charles.*) You see.

Sir Charles.

And pray, Madam, have you and my son had more than one interview?

Miss Hardcastle.

Yes, Sir, several.

Hardcastle.

(*To Sir Charles.*) You see.

Sir Charles.

But did he profess any attachment?

Miss Hardcastle.

A lasting one.

Sir Charles.

Did he talk of love?

Miss Hardcastle.

Much, Sir.

Sir Charles.

Amazing! And all this formally?

Miss Hardcastle.

Formally.

HARDCASTLE.

Now, my friend, I hope you are satisfied.

Sir CHARLES.

And how did he behave, Madam?

Miss HARDCASTLE.

As most profest admirers do: Said some civil things of my face; talked much of his want of merit, and the greatness of mine; mentioned his heart, gave a short tragedy speech, and ended with pretended rapture.

Sir CHARLES.

Now I'm perfectly convinced indeed. I know his conversation among women to be modest and submissive: This forward canting ranting manner by no means describes him; and, I am confident, he never sat for the picture.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Then, what, Sir, if I should convince you to your face of my sincerity? if you and my papa, in about half an hour, will place yourselves behind that screen, you shall hear him declare his passion to me in person.

Sir CHARLES.

Agreed. And if I find him what you describe, all my happiness in him must have an end. [*Exit.*

Miss HARDCASTLE.

And if you don't find him what I describe—I fear my happiness must never have a beginning.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the back of the Garden.

Enter Hastings.

Hastings.

What an idiot am I, to wait here for a fellow who probably takes a delight in mortifying me. He never intended to be punctual, and I'll wait no longer. What do I see? It is he! and perhaps with news of my Constance.

Enter Tony, *booted and spattered.*

Hastings.

My honest 'Squire! I now find you a man of your word. This looks like friendship.

Tony.

Ay, I'm your friend, and the best friend you have in the world, if you knew but all. This riding, by night, by the bye, is cursedly tiresome. It has shook me worse than the basket of a stage-coach.

Hastings.

But how? where did you leave your fellow-travellers? Are they in safety? Are they housed?

Tony.

Five and twenty miles in two hours and a half is no such bad driving. The poor beasts have smoked for it: Rabbit me, but I'd rather ride forty miles after a fox than ten with such varment.

Hastings.

Well, but where have you left the ladies? I die with impatience.

TONY.

Left them! Why where should I leave them but where I found them.

HASTINGS.

This is a riddle.

TONY.

Riddle me this then. What's that goes round the house, and round the house, and never touches the house?

HASTINGS.

I'm still astray.

TONY.

Why, that's it, mon. I have led them astray. By jingo, there's not a pond or a slough within five miles of the place but they can tell the taste of.

HASTINGS.

Ha! ha! ha! I understand: you took them in a round, while they supposed themselves going forward, and so you have at last brought them home again.

TONY.

You shall hear. I first took them down Feather-bed-Lane, where we stuck fast in the mud.—I then rattled them crack over the stones of Up-and-down Hill.—I then introduced them to the gibbet on Heavy-tree Heath; and from that, with a circum-bendibus, I fairly lodged them in the horse-pond at the bottom of the garden.

HASTINGS.

But no accident, I hope?

TONY.

No, no, only mother is confoundedly frightened. She thinks herself forty miles off. She's sick of the journey; and the cattle can scarce crawl. So if your own horses be ready, you may whip off with cousin, and I'll be bound that no soul here can budge a foot to follow you.

HASTINGS.

My dear friend, how can I be grateful?

TONY.

Ay, now it's dear friend, noble 'Squire. Just now, it was all idiot, cub, and run me through the guts. Damn your way of fighting, I say. After we take a knock in this part of the country, we kiss and be friends. But if you had run me through the guts, then I should be dead, and you might go kiss the hangman.

HASTINGS.

The rebuke is just. But I must hasten to relieve Miss Neville: if you keep the old lady employed, I promise to take care of the young one.

[*Exit* HASTINGS.

TONY.

Never fear me. Here she comes. Vanish! She's got from the pond, and draggled up to the waist like a mermaid.

Enter Mrs HARDCASTLE.

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

Oh, Tony, I'm killed! Shook! Battered to death. I shall never survive it. That last jolt, that

laid us against the quickset hedge, has done my business.

TONY.

Alack, mamma, it was all your own fault. You would be for running away by night, without knowing one inch of the way.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

I wish we were at home again. I never met so many accidents in so short a journey. Drenched in the mud, overturned in a ditch, stuck fast in a slough, jolted to a jelly, and at last to lose our way. Whereabouts do you think we are, Tony?

TONY.

By my guess we should come upon Crackskull Common, about forty miles from home.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

O lud! O lud! The most notorious spot in all the country. We only want a robbery to make a complete night on't.

TONY.

Don't be afraid, mamma, don't be afraid. Two of the five that kept here are hanged, and the other three may not find us. Don't be afraid.—Is that a man that's galloping behind us? No; it's only a tree.—Don't be afraid.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

The fright will certainly kill me.

TONY.

Do you see any thing like a black hat moving behind the thicket?

Mrs Hardcastle.

Oh, death!

Tony.

No; it's only a cow. Don't be afraid, mamma; don't be afraid.

Mrs Hardcastle.

As I'm alive, Tony, I see a man coming towards us. Ah! I'm sure on't. If he perceives us we are undone.

Tony.

(Aside.) Father-in-law, by all that's unlucky, come to take one of his night walks. *(To her.)* Ah! it's a highwayman with pistols as long as my arm. A damn'd ill-looking fellow.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Good Heaven defend us! He approaches.

Tony.

Do you hide yourself in that thicket, and leave me to manage him. If there be any danger, I'll cough, and cry hem. When I cough, be sure to keep close. (*Mrs Hardcastle hides behind a tree in the back Scene.*)

Enter Hardcastle.

Hardcastle.

I'm mistaken, or I heard voices of people in want of help. Oh, Tony, is that you? I did not expect you so soon back. Are your mother and her charge in safety?

TONY.

Very safe, Sir, at my aunt Pedigree's. Hem.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

(From behind.) Ah, death! I find there's danger.

HARDCASTLE.

Forty miles in three hours; sure that's too much, my youngster.

TONY.

Stout horses and willing minds make short journeys, as they say. Hem.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

(From behind.) Sure he'll do the dear boy no harm.

HARDCASTLE.

But I heard a voice here; I should be glad to know from whence it came.

TONY.

It was I, Sir, talking to myself, Sir. I was saying that forty miles in four hours was very good going. Hem. As to be sure it was. Hem. I have got a sort of cold by being out in the air. We'll go in, if you please. Hem.

HARDCASTLE.

But if you talked to yourself you did not answer yourself. I'm certain I heard two voices, and am resolved *(raising his voice)* to find the other out.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

(From behind.) Oh! he's coming to find me out. Oh!

TONY.

What need you go, Sir, if I tell you? Hem. I'll lay down my life for the truth—hem—I'll tell you all, Sir. (*Detaining him.*)

HARDCASTLE.

I tell you I will not be detained. I insist on seeing. It's in vain to expect I'll believe you.

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

(*Running forward from behind.*) O lud! he'll murder my poor boy, my darling! Here, good gentleman, whet your rage upon me. Take my money, my life, but spare that young gentleman; spare my child, if you have any mercy.

HARDCASTLE.

My wife, as I'm a Christian. From whence can she come? or what does she mean?

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

(*Kneeling.*) Take compassion on us, good Mr Highwayman. Take our money, our watches, all we have, but spare our lives. We will never bring you to justice; indeed we won't, good Mr Highwayman.

HARDCASTLE.

I believe the woman's out of her senses. What, Dorothy, don't you know me?

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

Mr Hardcastle, as I'm alive! My fears blinded me. But who, my dear, could have expected to meet you here, in this frightful place, so far from home? What has brought you to follow us?

HARDCASTLE.

Sure, Dorothy, you have not lost your wits? So far from home, when you are within forty yards of your own door! *(To him.)* This is one of your old tricks, you graceless rogue you. *(To her.)* Don't you know the gate and the mulberry-tree; and don't you remember the horse-pond, my dear?

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

Yes, I shall remember the horse-pond as long as I live; I have caught my death in it. *(To Tony.)* And is it to you, you graceless varlet, I owe all this? I'll teach you to abuse your mother, I will.

TONY.

Ecod, mother, all the parish says you have spoiled me, and so you may take the fruits on't.

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

I'll spoil you, I will.

[*Follows him off the stage.* *Exit.*

HARDCASTLE.

There's morality, however, in his reply. [*Exit.*

Enter HASTINGS *and* Miss NEVILLE.

HASTINGS.

My dear Constance, why will you deliberate thus? If we delay a moment, all is lost for ever. Pluck up a little resolution, and we shall soon be out of the reach of her malignity.

Miss NEVILLE.

I find it impossible. My spirits are so sunk with the agitations I have suffered, that I am unable to

face any new danger. Two or three years' patience will at last crown us with happiness.

HASTINGS.

Such a tedious delay is worse than inconstancy. Let us fly, my charmer. Let us date our happiness from this very moment. Perish fortune! Love and content will increase what we possess beyond a monarch's revenue. Let me prevail!

Miss NEVILLE.

No, Mr Hastings, no. Prudence once more comes to my relief, and I will obey its dictates. In the moment of passion, fortune may be despised, but it ever produces a lasting repentance. I'm resolved to apply to Mr Hardcastle's compassion and justice for redress.

HASTINGS.

But though he had the will, he has not the power to relieve you.

Miss NEVILLE.

But he has influence, and upon that I am resolved to rely.

HASTINGS.

I have no hopes. But since you persist, I must reluctantly obey you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE changes.

Enter Sir CHARLES, *and* Miss HARDCASTLE.

Sir CHARLES.

What a situation am I in! If what you say appears, I shall then find a guilty son. If what

he says be true, I shall then lose one that, of all others, I most wished for a daughter.

Miss Hardcastle.

I am proud of your approbation; and to shew I merit it, if you place yourselves as I directed, you shall hear his explicit declaration. But he comes.

Sir Charles.

I'll to your father, and keep him to the appointment. [*Exit* Sir Charles.

Enter Marlow.

Marlow.

Though prepared for setting out, I come once more to take leave; nor did I, till this moment, know the pain I feel in the separation.

Miss Hardcastle.

(*In her own natural manner.*) I believe these sufferings cannot be very great, Sir, which you can so easily remove. A day or two longer, perhaps, might lessen your uneasiness, by shewing the little value of what you now think proper to regret.

Marlow.

(*Aside.*) This girl every moment improves upon me. (*To her.*) It must not be, Madam. I have already trifled too long with my heart. My very pride begins to submit to my passion. The disparity of education and fortune, the anger of a parent, and the contempt of my equals, begin to lose their weight; and nothing can restore me to myself but this painful effort of resolution.

Miss Hardcastle.

Then go, Sir: I'll urge nothing more to detain you. Though my family be as good as her's you came down to visit, and my education, I hope, not inferior, what are these advantages without equal affluence? I must remain contented with the slight approbation of imputed merit; I must have only the mockery of your addresses, while all your serious aims are fixed on fortune.

Enter Hardcastle *and* Sir Charles, *from behind.*

Sir Charles.

Here, behind this screen.

Hardcastle.

Ay, ay; make no noise. I'll engage my Kate covers him with confusion at last.

Marlow.

By Heavens! Madam, fortune was ever my smallest consideration. Your beauty at first caught my eye; for who could see that without emotion? But every moment that I converse with you, steals in some new grace, heightens the picture, and gives it stronger expression. What at first seemed rustic plainness, now appears refined simplicity. What seemed forward assurance, now strikes me as the result of courageous innocence and conscious virtue.

Sir Charles.

What can it mean? He amazes me!

Hardcastle.

I told you how it would be. Hush!

MARLOW.

I am now determined to stay, Madam, and I have too good an opinion of my father's discernment, when he sees you, to doubt his approbation.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

No, Mr Marlow, I will not, cannot detain you. Do you think I could suffer a connexion in which there is the smallest room for repentance? Do you think I would take the mean advantage of a transient passion to load you with confusion? Do you think I could ever relish that happiness which was acquired by lessening yours?

MARLOW.

By all that's good, I can have no happiness but what's in your power to grant me! Nor shall I ever feel repentance but in not having seen your merits before. I will stay even contrary to your wishes; and though you should persist to shun me, I will make my respectful assiduities atone for the levity of my past conduct.

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Sir, I must entreat you'll desist. As our acquaintance began, so let it end, in indifference. I might have given an hour or two to levity; but seriously, Mr Marlow, do you think I could ever submit to a connexion where I must appear mercenary, and you imprudent? Do you think I could ever catch at the confident addresses of a secure admirer?

MARLOW.

(*Kneeling.*) Does this look like security? Does this look like confidence? No, Madam, every moment that shews me your merit, only serves to in-

crease my diffidence and confusion. Here let me continue——

Sir Charles.

I can hold it no longer. Charles, Charles, how hast thou deceived me! Is this your indifference, your uninteresting conversation?

Hardcastle.

Your cold contempt; your formal interview! What have you to say now?

Marlow.

That I'm all amazement! What can it mean?

Hardcastle.

It means that you can say and unsay things at pleasure: That you can address a lady in private, and deny it in public: That you have one story for us, and another for my daughter.

Marlow.

Daughter!—This lady your daughter?

Hardcastle.

Yes, Sir, my only daughter: My Kate; whose else should she be?

Marlow.

Oh, the devil!

Miss Hardcastle.

Yes, Sir, that very identical tall squinting lady you were pleased to take me for; (*courtesying*) she that you addressed as the mild, modest, sentimental man of gravity, and the bold forward agreeable Rattle of the ladies' club. Ha! ha! ha!

MARLOW.

Zounds, there's no bearing this; it's worse than death!

Miss HARDCASTLE.

In which of your characters, Sir, will you give us leave to address you? As the faltering gentleman, with looks on the ground, that speaks just to be heard, and hates hypocrisy; or the loud confident creature, that keeps it up with Mrs Mantrap, and old Miss Biddy Buckskin, till three in the morning?—Ha! ha! ha!

MARLOW.

O, curse on my noisy head! I never attempted to be impudent yet that I was not taken down! I must be gone.

HARDCASTLE.

By the hand of my body, but you shall not. I see it was all a mistake, and I am rejoiced to find it. You shall not, Sir, I tell you. I know she'll forgive you. Won't you forgive him, Kate? We'll all forgive you. Take courage, man.

[*They retire, she tormenting him to the back scene.*

Enter Mrs HARDCASTLE, TONY.

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

So, so, they're gone off. Let them go, I care not.

HARDCASTLE.

Who gone?

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

My dutiful niece and her gentleman, Mr Hast-

ings, from town. He who came down with our modest visitor here.

Sir Charles.

Who, my honest George Hastings? As worthy a fellow as lives, and the girl could not have made a more prudent choice.

Hardcastle.

Then, by the hand of my body, I'm proud of the connexion.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Well, if he has taken away the lady, he has not taken her fortune; that remains in this family to console us for her loss.

Hardcastle.

Sure, Dorothy, you would not be so mercenary?

Mrs Hardcastle.

Ay, that's my affair, not yours.

Hardcastle.

But you know if your son, when of age, refuses to marry his cousin, her whole fortune is then at her own disposal.

Mrs Hardcastle.

Ay, but he's not of age, and she has not thought proper to wait for his refusal.

Enter Hastings *and* Miss Neville.

Mrs Hardcastle.

(*Aside.*) What, returned so soon! I begin not to like it.

HASTINGS.

(*To Hardcastle.*) For my late attempt to fly off with your niece, let my present confusion be my punishment. We are now come back, to appeal from your justice to your humanity. By her father's consent I first paid her my addresses, and our passions were first founded in duty.

MISS NEVILLE.

Since his death, I have been obliged to stoop to dissimulation to avoid oppression. In an hour of levity, I was ready even to give up my fortune to secure my choice: But I'm now recovered from the delusion, and hope from your tenderness what is denied me from a nearer connexion.

MRS HARDCASTLE.

Pshaw, pshaw; this is all but the whining end of a modern novel.

HARDCASTLE.

Be it what it will, I'm glad they're come back to reclaim their due. Come hither, Tony, boy. Do you refuse this lady's hand whom I now offer you?

TONY.

What signifies my refusing? You know I can't refuse her till I'm of age, father.

HARDCASTLE.

While I thought concealing your age, boy, was likely to conduce to your improvement, I concurred with your mother's desire to keep it secret. But since I find she turns it to a wrong use, I must now declare you have been of age these three months.

TONY.

Of age! Am I of age, father?

HARDCASTLE.

Above three months.

TONY.

Then you'll see the first use I'll make of my liberty. (*Taking Miss Neville's hand.*) Witness all men by these presents, that I, Anthony Lumpkin, esquire, of BLANK place, refuse you, Constantia Neville, spinster, of no place at all, for my true and lawful wife. So Constance Neville may marry whom she pleases, and Tony Lumpkin is his own man again.

Sir CHARLES.

O brave 'Squire!

HASTINGS.

My worthy friend!

Mrs HARDCASTLE.

My undutiful offspring!

MARLOW.

Joy, my dear George, I give you joy sincerely. And could I prevail upon my little tyrant here to be less arbitrary, I should be the happiest man alive, if you would return me the favour.

HASTINGS.

(*To Miss Hardcastle.*) Come, Madam, you are now driven to the very last scene of all your contrivances. I know you like him, I'm sure he loves you, and you must and shall have him.

HARDCASTLE.

(*Joining their hands.*) And I say so too. And, Mr Marlow, if she makes as good a wife as she has a daughter, I don't believe you'll ever repent your bargain. So now to supper. To-morrow we shall gather all the poor of the parish about us, and the mistakes of the night shall be crowned with a merry morning: So, boy, take her; and as you have been mistaken in the mistress, my wish is, that you may never be mistaken in the wife.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE,

BY DR GOLDSMITH.

SPOKEN BY Mrs BULKLEY,

IN THE CHARACTER OF

Miss HARDCASTLE.

Well, having stoop'd to conquer with success,
And gain'd a husband without aid from dress,
Still, as a bar-maid, I could wish it too,
As I have conquer'd him to conquer you:
And let me say, for all your resolution,
That pretty bar-maids have done execution.
Our life is all a play, compos'd to please,
"We have our exits and our entrances."
The first act shows the simple country maid,
Harmless and young, of every thing afraid;
Blushes when hir'd, and with unmeaning action,
"I hopes as how to give you satisfaction."
Her second act displays a livelier scene—
The unblushing bar-maid of a country inn,
Who whisks about the house, at market caters,
Talks loud, coquets the guests, and scolds the waiters.
Next the scene shifts to town, and there she soars,
The chop-house toast of ogling *connoisseurs*.
On 'squires and cits she there displays her arts,
And on the gridiron broils her lovers' hearts—

And as she smiles, her triumphs to complete,
E'en common-councilmen forget to eat.
The fourth act shows her wedded to the 'squire,
And madam now begins to hold it higher;
Pretends to taste, at operas cries caro,
And quits her Nancy Dawson, for Che Faro:
Doats upon dancing, and in all her pride
Swims round the room, the Heinel of Cheapside:
Ogles and leers with artificial skill,
Till, having lost in age the power to kill,
She sits all night at cards, and ogles at spadille.
Such, through our lives the eventful history—
The fifth and last act still remains for me.
The bar-maid now for your protection prays,
Turns female Barrister, and pleads for Bays.

EPILOGUE,*

TO BE SPOKEN IN THE CHARACTER OF

TONY LUMPKIN.

BY J. CRADOCK, Esq.

Well—now all's ended—and my comrades gone,
Pray what becomes of mother's nonly son?
A hopeful blade!—in town I'll fix my station,
And try to make a bluster in the nation:
As for my cousin Neville, I renounce her,
Off—in a crack—I'll carry big Bet Bouncer.

Why should not I in the great world appear?
I soon shall have a thousand pounds a-year!
No matter what a man may here inherit,
In London—'gad, they've some regard to spirit.
I see the horses prancing up the streets,
And big Bet Bouncer bobs to all she meets;
Then hoiks to jigs and pastimes every night—
Not to the plays—they say it a'n't polite;

* This came too late to be spoken.

To Sadler's Wells, perhaps, or operas go,
And once by chance, to the roratorio.
Thus here and there, for ever up and down,
We'll set the fashions too to half the town;
And then at auctions—money ne'er regard,
Buy pictures like the great, ten pounds a-yard:
Zounds, we shall make these London gentry say,
We know what's damn'd genteel as well as they.

THE

PREFACE

TO

DOCTOR BROOKES'S

NEW AND ACCURATE SYSTEM OF

NATURAL HISTORY.

PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR MDCCLXIII.

PREFACE.

Of all the studies which have employed the industrious or amused the idle, perhaps natural history deserves the preference: other sciences generally terminate in doubt, or rest in bare speculation; but here every step is marked with certainty; and, while a description of the objects around us teaches to supply our wants, it satisfies our curiosity.

The multitude of nature's productions, however, seems at first to bewilder the inquirer, rather than excite his attention; the various wonders of the animal, vegetable, or mineral world, seem to exceed all powers of computation, and the science appears barren from its amazing fertility. But a nearer acquaintance with this study, by giving method to our researches, points out a similitude in many objects which at first appeared different; the mind by degrees rises to consider the things before it in general lights, till at length it finds nature, in almost every instance, acting with her usual simplicity.

Among the number of philosophers who, undaunted by their supposed variety, have attempted to give a description of the productions of nature, Aristotle deserves the first place. This great philosopher was furnished, by his pupil Alexander, with all that the then known world could produce to complete his design. By such parts of his work as have escaped the wreck of time, it appears, that he understood nature more clearly, and in a more comprehensive manner, than even the present age,

enlightened as it is with so many later discoveries, can boast. His design appears vast, and his knowledge extensive; he only considers things in general lights, and leaves every subject when it becomes too minute or remote to be useful. In his History of Animals, he first describes man, and makes him a standard with which to compare the deviations in every more imperfect kind that is to follow. But if he has excelled in the history of each, he, together with Pliny and Theophrastus, has failed in the exactness of their descriptions. There are many creatures described by those naturalists of antiquity, which are so imperfectly characterized, that it is impossible to tell to what animal now subsisting we can refer the description. This is an unpardonable neglect, and alone sufficient to depreciate their merits; but their credulity, and the mutilations they have suffered by time, have rendered them still less useful, and justify each subsequent attempt to improve what they have left behind. The most laborious, as well as the most voluminous naturalist among the moderns, is Aldrovandus. He was furnished with every requisite for making an extensive body of natural history. He was learned and rich, and during the course of a long life, indefatigable and accurate. But his works are insupportably tedious and disgusting, filled with unnecessary quotations and unimportant digressions. Whatever learning he had he was willing should be known, and, unwearied himself, he supposed his readers could never tire: in short, he appears an useful assistant to those who would compile a body of natural history, but is utterly unsuited to such as only wish to read it with profit and delight.

Gesner and Johnson, willing to abridge the voluminous productions of Aldrovandus, have attempted to reduce natural history into method, but

their efforts have been so incomplete as scarcely to deserve mentioning. Their attempts were improved upon, some time after, by Mr Ray, whose method we have adopted in the history of quadrupeds, birds, and fishes, which is to follow. No systematical writer has been more happy than he in reducing natural history into a form, at once the shortest, yet most comprehensive.

The subsequent attempts of Mr Klein and Linnæus, it is true, have had their admirers, but, as all methods of classing the productions of nature are calculated merely to ease the memory and enlighten the mind, that writer who answers such ends with brevity and perspicuity, is most worthy of regard. And in this respect, Mr Ray undoubtedly remains still without a rival: he was sensible that no accurate idea could be formed from a mere distribution of animals in particular classes; he has therefore ranged them according to their most obvious qualities; and, content with brevity in his distribution, has employed accuracy only in the particular description of every animal. This intentional inaccuracy only in the general system of Ray, Klein and Linnæus have undertaken to amend; and thus by multiplying divisions, instead of impressing the mind with distinct ideas, they only serve to confound it, making the language of the science more difficult than even the science itself.

All order whatsoever is to be used for the sake of brevity and perspicuity; we have therefore followed that of Mr Ray in preference to the rest, whose method of classing animals, though not so accurate, perhaps, is yet more obvious, and being shorter, is more easily remembered. In his lifetime he published his "Synopsis Methodica Quadrupedum et Serpentini Generis," and, after his death, there came out a posthumous work under the care of Dr Derham, which, as the title-page informs us,

was revised and perfected before his death. Both the one and the other have their merits; but as he wrote *currente calamo*, for subsistence, they are consequently replete with errors, and though his manner of treating natural history be preferable to that of all others, yet there was still room for a new work, that might at once retain his excellencies, and supply his deficiencies.

As to the natural history of insects, it has not been so long or so greatly cultivated as other parts of this science. Our own countryman Moufett is the first of any note that I have met with who has treated this subject with success. However, it was not till lately that it was reduced to a regular system, which might be, in a great measure, owing to the seeming insignificancy of the animals themselves, even though they were always looked upon as of great use in medicine; and upon that account only have been taken notice of by many medical writers. Thus Dioscorides has treated of their use in physic; and it must be owned, some of them have been well worth observation on this account. There were not wanting also those who long since had thoughts of reducing this kind of knowledge to a regular form, among whom was Mr Ray, who was discouraged by the difficulty attending it: this study has been pursued of late, however, with diligence and success. Reaumur and Swammerdam have principally distinguished themselves on this account; and their respective treatises plainly shew, that they did not spend their labour in vain. Since their time, several authors have published their systems, among whom is Linnæus, whose method being generally esteemed, I have thought proper to adopt. He has classed them in a very regular manner, though he says but little of the insects themselves. However, I have endeavoured to supply that defect from other parts of his works,

and from other authors who have written upon this subject; by which means, it is hoped, the curiosity of such as delight in these studies will be in some measure satisfied. Such of them as have been more generally admired, have been longest insisted upon, and particularly caterpillars and butterflies, relative to which, perhaps, there is the largest catalogue that has ever appeared in the English language.

Mr Edwards and Mr Buffon, one in the History of Birds, the other of Quadrupeds, have undoubtedly deserved highly of the public, as far as their labours have extended; but as they have hitherto cultivated but a small part in the wide field of natural history, a comprehensive system in this most pleasing science has been hitherto wanting. Nor is it a little surprising, when every other branch of literature has been of late cultivated with so much success among us, how this most interesting department should have been neglected. It has been long obvious that Aristotle was incomplete, and Pliny credulous, Aldrovandus too prolix, and Linnæus too short, to afford the proper entertainment; yet we have had no attempts to supply their defects, or to give a history of nature at once complete and concise, calculated at once to please and improve.

How far the author of the present performance has obviated the wants of the public in these respects, is left to the world to determine; this much, however, he may without vanity assert, that whether the system here presented be approved or not, he has left the science in a better state than he found it. He has consulted every author whom he imagined might give him new and authentic information, and painfully searched through heaps of lumber to detect falsehood; so that many parts of the following work have exhausted much labour

in the execution, though they may discover little to the superficial observer.

Nor have I neglected any opportunity that offered of conversing upon these subjects with travellers, upon whose judgments and veracity I could rely. Thus comparing accurate narrations with what has been already written, and following either, as the circumstances or credibility of the witness led me to believe. But I have had one advantage over almost all former naturalists, namely, that of having visited a variety of countries myself, and examined the productions of each upon the spot. Whatever America or the known parts of Africa have produced to excite curiosity, has been carefully observed by me, and compared with the accounts of others. By this I have made some improvements that will appear in their place, and have been less liable to be imposed upon by the hearsay relations of credulity.

A complete, cheap, and commodious body of natural history being wanted in our language, it was these advantages which prompted me to this undertaking. Such, therefore, as choose to range in the delightful fields of nature, will, I flatter myself, here find a proper guide; and those who have a design to furnish a cabinet, will find copious instructions. With one of these volumes in his hand, a spectator may go through the largest museum, the British not excepted, see nature through all her varieties, and compare her usual operations with those wanton productions, in which she seems to sport with human sagacity. I have been sparing, however, in the description of the deviations from the usual course of production; first, because such are almost infinite, and the natural historian, who should spend his time in describing deformed nature, would be as absurd as the statuary, who should fix upon a deformed man from whom to take his model of perfection.

But I would not raise expectations in the reader which it may not be in my power to satisfy: he who takes up a book of science must not expect to acquire knowledge at the same easy rate that a reader of romance does entertainment; on the contrary, all sciences, and natural history among the rest, have a language and a manner of treatment peculiar to themselves; and he who attempts to dress them in borrowed or foreign ornaments, is every whit as uselessly employed as the German apothecary we are told of, who turned the whole dispensatory into verse. It will be sufficient for me, if the following system is found as pleasing as the nature of the subject will bear, neither obscured by an unnecessary ostentation of science, nor lengthened out by an affected eagerness after needless embellishment.

The description of every object will be found as clear and concise as possible, the design not being to amuse the ear with well-turned periods, or the imagination with borrowed ornaments, but to impress the mind with the simplest views of nature. To answer this end more distinctly, a picture of such animals is given as we are least acquainted with. All that is intended by this is, only to guide the inquirer with more certainty to the object itself, as it is to be found in nature. I never would advise a student to apply to any science, either anatomy, physic, or natural history, by looking on pictures only; they may serve to direct him more readily to the objects intended, but he must by no means suppose himself possessed of adequate and distinct ideas, till he has viewed the things themselves, and not their representations.

Copperplates, therefore, moderately well done, answer the learner's purpose every whit as well as those which cannot be purchased but at a vast ex-

pense ; they serve to guide us to the archetypes in nature, and this is all that the finest picture should be permitted to do, for nature herself ought always to be examined by the learner before he has done.

INTRODUCTION

TO A NEW

HISTORY OF THE WORLD;

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN
TWELVE VOLUMES, OCTAVO.

BY J. NEWBERY, 1764.

TO THE PUBLIC.

EXPERIENCE every day convinces us, that no part of learning affords so much wisdom upon such easy terms as history. Our advances in most other studies are slow and disgusting, acquired with effort, and retained with difficulty; but in a well written history, every step we proceed only serves to increase our ardour: we profit by the experience of others, without sharing their toils or misfortunes; and in this part of knowledge, in a more particular manner, study is but relaxation.

Of all histories, however, that which, not confined to any particular reign or country, but which extends to the transactions of all mankind, is the most useful and entertaining. As in geography we can have no just idea of the situation of one country, without knowing that of others; so in history it is in some measure necessary to be acquainted with the whole thoroughly to comprehend a part. A knowledge of universal history is therefore highly useful, nor is it less entertaining. Tacitus complains, that the transactions of a few reigns could not afford him a sufficient stock of materials to please or interest the reader; but here that objection is entirely removed; a History of the World presents the most striking events, with the greatest variety.

These are a part of the many advantages which universal history has over all others, and which have encouraged so many writers to attempt compiling works of this kind among the ancients, as

well as the moderns. Each invited by the manifest utility of the design, yet many of them failing through the great and unforeseen difficulties of the undertaking; the barrenness of events in the early periods of history, and their fertility in modern times, equally serving to increase their embarrassments. In recounting the transactions of remote antiquity, there is such a defect of materials, that the willingness of mankind to supply the chasm has given birth to falsehood, and invited conjecture. The farther we look back into those distant periods, all the objects seem to become more obscure, or are totally lost, by a sort of perspective diminution. In this case, therefore, when the eye of truth could no longer discern clearly, fancy undertook to form the picture; and fables were invented where truths were wanting. For this reason, we have declined enlarging on such disquisitions, not for want of materials, which offered themselves at every step of our progress, but because we thought them not worth discussing. Neither have we encumbered the beginning of our work with the various opinions of the heathen philosophers concerning the creation, which may be found in most of our systems of theology, and belong more properly to the divine than the historian. Sensible how liable we are to redundancy in this first part of our design, it has been our endeavour to unfold ancient history with all possible conciseness; and, solicitous to improve the reader's stock of knowledge, we have been indifferent as to the display of our own. We have not stopt to discuss or confute all the absurd conjectures men of speculation have thrown in our way. We at first had even determined not to deform the page of truth with the names of those, whose labours had only been calculated to encumber it with fiction and vain speculation. However, we have thought

proper, upon second thoughts, slightly to mention them and their opinions, quoting the author at the bottom of the page, so that the reader, who is curious about such particularities, may know where to have recourse for fuller information.

As, in the early part of history, a want of real facts hath induced many to spin out the little that was known with conjecture, so in the modern part, the superfluity of trifling anecdotes was equally apt to introduce confusion. In one case, history has been rendered tedious, from our want of knowing the truth; in the other, from knowing too much of truth not worth our notice. Every year that is added to the age of the world, serves to lengthen the thread of its history; so that, to give this branch of learning a just length in the circle of human pursuits, it is necessary to abridge several of the least important facts. It is true, we often at present see the annals of a single reign, or even the transactions of a single year, occupying folios: but can the writers of such tedious journals ever hope to reach posterity, or do they think that our descendants, whose attention will naturally be turned to their own concerns, can exhaust so much time in the examination of ours? A plan of general history, rendered too extensive, deters us from a study that is perhaps, of all others, the most useful, by rendering it too laborious; and, instead of alluring our curiosity, excites our despair. Writers are unpardonable who convert our amusement into labour, and divest knowledge of one of its most pleasing allurements. The ancients have represented history under the figure of a woman, easy, graceful and inviting; but we have seen her in our days converted, like the virgin of *Nabis*, into an instrument of torture.

How far we have retrenched these excesses, and steered between the opposites of exuberance and

abridgment, the judicious are left to determine. We here offer the public a History of Mankind, from the earliest accounts of time to the present age, in twelve volumes, which, upon mature deliberation, appeared to us the proper mean. It has been our endeavour to give every fact its full scope; but, at the same time, to retrench all disgusting superfluity, to give every object the due proportion it ought to maintain in the general picture of mankind, without crowding the canvass. We hope, therefore, that the reader will here see the revolutions of empires without confusion, and trace arts and laws from one kingdom to another, without losing his interest in the narrative of their other transactions. To attain these ends with greater certainty of success, we have taken care, in some measure, to banish that late, and we may add, Gothic practice, of using a multiplicity of notes. A thing as much unknown to the ancient historians, as it is disgusting in the moderns. Balzac somewhere calls vain erudition the baggage of antiquity; might we in turn be permitted to make an apophthegm, we would call notes the baggage of a bad writer. It certainly argues a defect of method, or a want of perspicuity, when an author is thus obliged to write notes upon his own works; and it may assuredly be said, that whoever undertakes to write a comment upon himself, will for ever remain without a rival his own commentator. We have, therefore, lopped off such excrescences, though not to any degree of affectation; as sometimes an acknowledged blemish may be admitted into works of skill, either to cover a greater defect, or to take a nearer course to beauty. Having mentioned the danger of affectation, it may be proper to observe, that as this, of all defects, is most apt to insinuate itself into such a work, we have, therefore, been upon our guard against it. Innovation, in a

performance of this nature, should by no means be attempted: those names and spellings which have been used in our language for time immemorial, ought to continue unaltered; for, like states, they acquire a sort of *jus diuturnæ possessionis*, as the civilians express it, however unjust their original claims might have been.

With respect to chronology and geography, the one of which fixes actions to time, while the other assigns them to place, we have followed the most approved methods among the moderns. All that was requisite in this, was to preserve one system of each invariably, and permit such as chose to adopt the plans of others, to rectify our deviations to their own standard. If actions and things are made to preserve their due distances of time and place mutually with respect to each other, it matters little as to the duration of them all with respect to eternity, or their situation with regard to the universe.

Thus much we have thought proper to premise concerning a work which, however executed, has cost much labour and great expense. Had we for our judges the unbiassed and the judicious alone, few words would have served, or even silence would have been our best address; but when it is considered that we have laboured for the public, that miscellaneous being, at variance within itself, from the differing influence of pride, prejudice, or incapacity; a public already sated with attempts of this nature, and in a manner unwilling to find out merit till forced upon its notice; we hope to be pardoned for thus endeavouring to shew where it is presumed we have had a superiority. A History of the World to the present time, at once satisfactory and succinct, calculated rather for use than curiosity, to be read rather than consulted, seeking applause from the reader's feelings,

not from his ignorance of learning, or affectation of being thought learned: a history that may be purchased at an easy expense, yet that omits nothing material, delivered in a style correct, yet familiar, was wanting in our language; and, though sensible of our own insufficiency, this defect we have attempted to supply. Whatever reception the present age or posterity may give this work, we rest satisfied with our own endeavours to deserve a kind one. The completion of our design has for some years taken up all the time we could spare from other occupations, of less importance indeed to the public, but probably more advantageous to ourselves. We are unwilling, therefore, to dismiss this subject without observing, that the labour of so great a part of life should, at least, be examined with candour, and not carelessly confounded in that multiplicity of daily publications, which are conceived without effort, are produced without praise, and sink without censure.

THE PREFACE

TO THE

ROMAN HISTORY.

BY

DR GOLDSMITH.

FIRST PRINTED IN MDCCLXIX.

PREFACE.

THERE are some subjects on which a writer must decline all attempts to acquire fame, satisfied with being obscurely useful. After such a number of Roman Histories, in almost all languages, ancient and modern, it would be but imposture to pretend new discoveries, or to expect to offer any thing in a work of this kind, which has not been often anticipated by others. The facts which it relates have been a hundred times repeated, and every occurrence has been so variously considered, that learning can scarcely find a new anecdote, or genius give novelty to the old. I hope, therefore, for the reader's indulgence, if, in the following attempt, it shall appear, that my only aim was to supply a concise, plain, and unaffected narrative of the rise and decline of a well known empire. I was contented to make such a book as could not fail of being serviceable, though of all others the most unlikely to promote the reputation of the writer. Instead, therefore, of pressing forward among the ambitious, I only claim the merit of knowing my own strength, and falling back among the hindmost ranks, with conscious inferiority.

I am not ignorant, however, that it would be no difficult task to pursue the same art by which many dull men, every day, acquire a reputation in history: such might easily be attained, by fixing on some obscure period to write upon, where much seeming erudition might be displayed, almost unknown, because not worth remembering; and many maxims in politics might be advanced, entirely new, because altogether false. But I have pursued a contrary method, choosing the most noted period

in history, and offering no remarks, but such as I thought strictly true.

The reasons of my choice were, that we had no history of this splendid period in our language, but what was either too voluminous for common use, or too meanly written to please. Catrou and Rouille's history, in six volumes folio, translated into our language by Bundy, is entirely unsuited to the time and expense mankind usually choose to bestow upon this subject. Rollin and his continuator Crevier, making nearly thirty volumes octavo, seem to labour under the same imputation; as likewise Hooke, who has spent three quartos upon the Republic alone, the rest of his undertaking remaining unfinished.* There only, therefore, remained the history by Echard, in five volumes octavo, whose plan and mine seemed to coincide; and, had his execution been equal to his design, it had precluded the present undertaking. But the truth is, it is so poorly written, the facts so crowded, the narration so spiritless, and the characters so indistinctly marked, that the most ardent curiosity must cool in the perusal; and the noblest transactions that ever warmed the human heart, as described by him, must cease to interest.

I have endeavoured, therefore, in the present work, or rather compilation, to obviate the inconveniences arising from the exuberance of the former, as well as from the unpleasantness of the latter. It was supposed, that two volumes might be made to comprise all that was requisite to be known, or pleasing to be read, by such as only examined history, to prepare them for more important studies. Too much time may be given even to laudable pur-

* Mr Hooke's three quartos above mentioned, reach only to the end of the Gallic war. A fourth volume to the end of the Republic, was afterwards published in 1771. Dr Goldsmith's preface was written in 1769. Mr Hooke's quarto edition has been republished in eleven volumes octavo.

suits, and there is none more apt than this to allure the student from the necessary branches of learning, and, if I may so express it, entirely to engross his industry. What is here offered, therefore, may be sufficient for all, except such who make history the peculiar business of their lives: To such, the most tedious narrative will seem but an abridgment, as they measure the merits of a work, rather by the quantity than the quality of its contents: others, however, who think more soberly, will agree, that in so extensive a field as that of the transactions of Rome, more judgment may be shown by selecting what is important, than by adding what is obscure.

The history of this empire has been extended to six volumes folio; and I aver, that with very little learning, it might be increased to sixteen more; but what would this be, but to load the subject with unimportant facts, and so to weaken the narration, that, like the empire described, it must necessarily sink beneath the weight of its own acquisitions?

But while I thus endeavoured to avoid prolixity, it was found no easy matter to prevent crowding the facts, and to give every narrative its proper play. In reality, no art can contrive to avoid opposite defects; he who indulges in minute particularities, will be often languid; and he who studies conciseness, will as frequently be dry and unentertaining. As it was my aim to comprise as much as possible in the smallest compass, it is feared the work will often be subject to the latter imputation; but it was impossible to furnish the public with a cheap Roman History in two volumes octavo, and at the same time to give all that warmth to the narrative, all those colourings to the description, which works of twenty times the bulk have room to exhibit. I shall be fully satisfied, therefore, if it

furnishes an interest sufficient to allure the reader to the end; and this is a claim to which few abridgments can justly make pretensions.

To these objections there are some who may add, that I have rejected many of the modern improvements in Roman History, and that every character is left in full possession of that fame or infamy which it obtained from its contemporaries, or those who wrote immediately after.

I acknowledge the charge, for it appears now too late to rejudge the virtues or the vices of those men, who were but very incompletely known even to their own historians. The Romans, perhaps, upon many occasions, formed wrong ideas of virtue; but they were by no means so ignorant or abandoned in general, as not to give to their brightest characters the greatest share of their applause; and I do not know whether it be fair to try Pagan actions by the standard of Christian morality.

But whatever may be my execution of this work, I have very little doubt about the success of the undertaking: the subject is the noblest that ever employed human attention; and, instead of requiring a writer's aid, will even support him with its splendour. The Empire of the World, rising from the meanest origin, and growing great by a strict veneration for religion, and an implicit confidence in its commanders; continually changing the mode, but seldom the spirit of its government; being a constitution, in which the military power, whether under the name of citizens or soldiers, almost always prevailed; adopting all the improvements of other nations with the most indefatigable industry, and submitting to be taught by those whom it afterwards subdued. This is a picture that must affect us, however it be disposed; these materials must have their value, under the hand of the meanest workman.

THE PREFACE

TO THE

HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

BY

DR GOLDSMITH.

FIRST PRINTED IN MDCCLXXI.

PREFACE.

From the favourable reception given to my abridgment of Roman History, published some time since, several friends, and others whose business leads them to consult the wants of the public, have been induced to suppose, that an English History, written on the same plan, would be acceptable.

It was their opinion, that we still wanted a work of this kind, where the narrative, though very concise, is not totally without interest, and the facts, though crowded, are yet distinctly seen.

The business of abridging the works of others, has hitherto fallen to the lot of very dull men; and the art of blotting, which an eminent critic calls the most difficult of all others, has been usually practised by those who found themselves unable to write. Hence our abridgments are generally more tedious than the works from which they pretend to relieve us; and they have effectually embarrassed that road which they laboured to shorten.

As the present compiler starts with such humble competitors, it will scarcely be thought vanity in him if he boasts himself their superior. Of the many abridgments of our own history, hitherto published, none seems possessed of any share of merit or reputation; some have been written in dialogue, or merely in the stiffness of an index, and some to answer the purposes of a party. A very

small share of taste, therefore, was sufficient to keep the compiler from the defects of the one, and a very small share of philosophy from the misrepresentations of the other.

It is not easy, however, to satisfy the different expectations of mankind in a work of this kind, calculated for every apprehension, and on which all are consequently capable of forming some judgment. Some may say that it is too long to pass under the denomination of an abridgment; and others, that it is too dry to be admitted as a history: it may be objected, that reflection is almost entirely banished to make room for facts, and yet, that many facts are wholly omitted, which might be necessary to be known. It must be confessed, that all those objections are partly true; for it is impossible in the same work at once to attain contrary advantages. The compiler, who is stinted in room, must often sacrifice interest to brevity; and, on the other hand, while he endeavours to amuse, must frequently transgress the limits to which his plan should confine him. Thus, all such as desire only amusement may be disgusted with his brevity; and such as seek for information may object to his displacing facts for empty description.

To attain the greatest number of advantages with the fewest inconveniencies, is all that can be attained in an abridgment, the name of which implies imperfection. It will be sufficient, therefore, to satisfy the writer's wishes, if the present work be found a plain, unaffected narrative of facts, with just ornament enough to keep attention awake, and with reflection barely sufficient to set the reader upon thinking. Very moderate abilities were equal to such an undertaking, and it is hoped the performance will satisfy such as take up books to be informed or amused, without much considering

who the writer is, or envying any success he may have had in a former compilation.

As the present publication is designed for the benefit of those who intend to lay a foundation for future study, or desire to refresh their memories upon the old, or who think a moderate share of history sufficient for the purposes of life, recourse has been had only to those authors which are best known, and those facts only have been selected which are allowed on all hands to be true. Were an epitome of history the field for displaying erudition, the author could shew that he has read many books which others have neglected, and that he also could advance many anecdotes which are at present very little known. But it must be remembered, that all these minute recoveries could be inserted only to the exclusion of more material facts, which it would be unpardonable to omit. He foregoes, therefore, the petty ambition of being thought a reader of forgotten books; his aim being not to add to our present stock of history, but to contract it.

The books which have been used in this abridgment are chiefly Rapin, Carte, Smollett, and Hume. They have each their peculiar admirers, in proportion as the reader is studious of historical antiquities, fond of minute anecdote, a warm partisan, or a deliberate reasoner. Of these I have particularly taken Hume for my guide, as far as he goes; and it is but justice to say, that wherever I was obliged to abridge his work, I did it with reluctance, as I scarcely cut out a single line that did not contain a beauty.

But though I must warmly subscribe to the learning, elegance, and depth of Mr Hume's history, yet I cannot entirely acquiesce in his principles. With regard to religion, he seems desirous of playing a double part, of appearing to some readers

as if he reverenced, and to others as if he ridiculed it. He seems sensible of the political necessity of religion in every state; but at the same time, he would every-where insinuate that it owes its authority to no higher an origin. Thus he weakens its influence, while he contends for its utility; and vainly hopes, that while free-thinkers shall applaud his scepticism, real believers will reverence him for his zeal.

In his opinions respecting government, perhaps also he may be sometimes reprehensible; but in a country like ours, where mutual contention contributes to the security of the constitution, it will be impossible for an historian who attempts to have any opinion, to satisfy all parties. It is not yet decided in politics, whether the diminution of kingly power in England tends to increase the happiness or the freedom of the people. For my own part, from seeing the bad effects of the tyranny of the great in those republican states that pretend to be free, I cannot help wishing that our monarchs may still be allowed to enjoy the power of controlling the encroachments of the great at home.

A king may easily be restrained from doing wrong, as he is but one man; but if a number of the great are permitted to divide all authority, who can punish them if they abuse it? Upon this principle, therefore, and not from empty notions of divine or hereditary right, some may think I have leaned towards monarchy. But as, in the things I have hitherto written, I have neither allured the vanity of the great by flattery, nor satisfied the malignity of the vulgar by scandal, as I have endeavoured to get an honest reputation by liberal pursuits, it is hoped the reader will admit my impartiality.

THE PREFACE

TO A

HISTORY OF THE EARTH

AND

ANIMATED NATURE.

BY

DR GOLDSMITH.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCCLXXIV.

PREFACE.

Natural History, considered in its utmost extent, comprehends two objects. First, that of discovering, ascertaining, and naming all the various productions of nature. Secondly, that of describing the properties, manners, and relations, which they bear to us, and to each other. The first, which is the most difficult part of the science, is systematical, dry, mechanical, and incomplete. The second is more amusing, exhibits new pictures to the imagination, and improves our relish for existence, by widening the prospect of nature around us.

Both, however, are necessary to those who would understand this pleasing science in its utmost extent. The first care of every inquirer, no doubt, should be, to see, to visit, and examine every object, before he pretends to inspect its habitudes or its history. From seeing and observing the thing itself, he is most naturally led to speculate upon its uses, its delights, or its inconveniencies.

Numberless obstructions, however, are found in this part of his pursuit, that frustrate his diligence and retard his curiosity. The objects in nature are so many, and even those of the same kind are exhibited in such a variety of forms, that the inquirer finds himself lost in the exuberance before him, and like a man who attempts to count the stars unassisted by art, his powers are all distracted in barren superfluity.

To remedy this embarrassment, artificial systems have been devised, which, grouping into masses

those parts of nature more nearly resembling each other, refer the inquirer for the name of the single object he desires to know, to some one of those general distributions where it is to be found by further examination. If, for instance, a man should in his walks meet with an animal, the name, and consequently the history of which he desires to know, he is taught by systematic writers of natural history to examine its most obvious qualities, whether a quadruped, a bird, a fish, or an insect. Having determined it, for explanation sake, to be an insect, he examines whether it has wings; if he finds it possessed of these, he is taught to examine whether it has two or four; if possessed of four, he is taught to observe, whether the two upper wings are of a shelly hardness, and serve as cases to those under them; if he finds the wings composed in this manner, he is then taught to pronounce, that this insect is one of the beetle kind: of the beetle kind there are three different classes, distinguished from each other by their feelers; he examines the insect before him, and finds that the feelers are elevated or knobbed at the ends; of beetles, with feelers thus formed, there are ten kinds, and among those, he is taught to look for the precise name of that which is before him. If, for instance, the knob be divided at the ends, and the belly be streaked with white, it is no other than the Dor or the Maybug, an animal, the noxious qualities of which give it a very distinguished rank in the history of the insect creation. In this manner, a system of natural history may, in some measure, be compared to a dictionary of words. Both are solely intended to explain the names of things; but with this difference, that in the dictionary of words, we are led from the name of the thing to its definition, whereas, in the system of

natural history, we are led from the definition to find out the name.

Such are the efforts of writers, who have composed their works with great labour and ingenuity, to direct the learner in his progress through nature, and to inform him of the name of every animal, plant, or fossil substance, that he happens to meet with; but it would be only deceiving the reader to conceal the truth, which is, that books alone can never teach him this art in perfection; and the solitary student can never succeed. Without a master and a previous knowledge of many of the objects in nature, his book will only serve to confound and disgust him. Few of the individual plants or animals that he may happen to meet with are in that precise state of health, or that exact period of vegetation, whence their descriptions were taken. Perhaps he meets the plant only with leaves, but the systematic writer has described it in flower. Perhaps he meets the bird before it has moulted its first feathers, while the systematic description was made in the state of full perfection. He thus ranges without an instructor, confused and with sickening curiosity, from subject to subject, till at last he gives up the pursuit in the multiplicity of his disappointments. Some practice, therefore, much instruction, and diligent reading, are requisite to make a ready and expert naturalist, who shall be able, even by the help of a system, to find out the name of every object he meets with. But when this tedious, though requisite part of study is attained, nothing but delight and variety attend the rest of his journey. Wherever he travels, like a man in a country where he has many friends, he meets with nothing but acquaintances and allurements in all the stages of his way. The mere uninformed spectator passes on in gloomy solitude, but the naturalist, in every plant, in every

insect, and every pebble, finds something to entertain his curiosity, and excite his speculation.

Hence it appears, that a system may be considered as a dictionary in the study of nature. The ancients, however, who have all written most delightfully on this subject, seem entirely to have rejected those humble and mechanical helps of science. They contented themselves with seizing upon the great outlines of history; and passing over what was common, as not worth the detail, they only dwelt upon what was new, great, and surprising, and sometimes even warmed the imagination at the expense of truth. Such of the moderns as revived this science in Europe, undertook the task more methodically, though not in a manner so pleasing. Aldrovandus, Gesner, and Johnson, seemed desirous of uniting the entertaining and rich descriptions of the ancients, with the dry and systematic arrangement of which they were the first projectors. This attempt, however, was extremely imperfect, as the great variety of nature was, as yet, but very inadequately known. Nevertheless, by attempting to carry on both objects at once; first, of directing us to the name of the things, and then giving the detail of its history, they drew out their works into a tedious and unreasonable length; and thus mixing incompatible aims, they have left their labours rather to be occasionally consulted, than read with delight by posterity.

The later moderns, with that good sense which they have carried into every other part of science, have taken a different method in cultivating natural history. They have been content to give, not only the brevity, but also the dry and disgusting air of a dictionary to their systems. Ray, Klein, Brisson, and Linnæus, have had only one aim, that of pointing out the object in nature, of discovering its

name, and where it was to be found in those authors that treated of it in a more prolix and satisfactory manner. Thus, natural history, at present, is carried on in two distinct and separate channels, the one serving to lead us to the thing, the other conveying the history of the thing, as supposing it already known.

The following natural history is written with only such an attention to system, as serves to remove the reader's embarrassments, and allure him to proceed. It can make no pretensions in directing him to the name of every object he meets with; that belongs to works of a very different kind, and written with very different aims. It will fully answer my design, if the reader, being already possessed of the name of any animal, shall find here a short, though satisfactory history of its habitudes, its subsistence, its manners, its friendships, and hostilities. My aim has been to carry on just as much method as was sufficient to shorten my descriptions by generalizing them, and never to follow order where the art of writing, which is but another name for good sense, informed me that it would only contribute to the reader's embarrassment.

Still, however, the reader will perceive, that I have formed a kind of system in the history of every part of animated nature, directing myself by the great and obvious distinctions that she herself seems to have made, which, though too few to point exactly to the name, are yet sufficient to illuminate the subject, and remove the reader's perplexity. M. Buffon, indeed, who has brought greater talents to this part of learning than any other man, has almost entirely rejected method in classing quadrupeds. This, with great deference to such a character, appears to me running into the opposite extreme; and, as some moderns have of late spent much time, great pains, and some learning, all to

very little purpose, in systematic arrangement, he seems so much disgusted by their trifling, but ostentatious efforts, that he describes his animals almost in the order they happen to come before him.

This want of method seems to be a fault, but he can lose little by a criticism, which every dull man can make, or by an error in arrangement, from which the dullest are the most usually free.

In other respects, as far as this able philosopher has gone, I have taken him for my guide. The warmth of his style, and the brilliancy of his imagination, are inimitable. Leaving him, therefore, without a rival in these, and only availing myself of his information, I have been content to describe things in my own way; and though many of the materials are taken from him, yet I have added, retrenched, and altered, as I thought proper. It was my intention, at one time, whenever I differed from him, to have mentioned it at the bottom of the page; but this occurred so often, that I soon found it would look like envy, and might, perhaps, convict me of those very errors which I was wanting to lay upon him.

I have, therefore, as being every way his debtor, concealed my dissent, where my opinion was different; but wherever I borrow from him, I take care at the bottom of the page to express my obligations. But, though my obligations to this writer are many, they extend but to the smallest part of the work, as he has hitherto completed only the history of quadrupeds. I was, therefore, left to my reading alone, to make out the history of birds, fishes, and insects, of which the arrangement was so difficult, and the necessary information so widely diffused, and so obscurely related when found, that it proved by much the most laborious part of the undertaking. Thus, having made use of M. Buffon's lights in the first part of this work, I may,

with some share of confidence, recommend it to the public. But what shall I say of that part, where I have been entirely left without his assistance? As I would affect neither modesty nor confidence, it will be sufficient to say, that my reading upon this part of the subject has been very extensive; and that I have taxed my scanty circumstances in procuring books, which are on this subject, of all others, the most expensive. In consequence of this industry, I here offer a work to the public, of a kind which has never been attempted in ours, or any other modern language that I know of. The ancients, indeed, and Pliny in particular, have anticipated me in the present manner of treating natural history. Like those historians who described the events of a campaign, they have not condescended to give the private particulars of every individual that formed the army; they were content with characterizing the generals, and describing their operations, while they left it to meaner hands to carry the muster-roll. I have followed their manner, rejecting the numerous fables which they adopted, and adding the improvements of the moderns, which are so numerous, that they actually make up the bulk of natural history.

The delight which I found in reading Pliny, first inspired me with the idea of a work of this nature. Having a taste rather classical than scientific, and having but little employed myself in turning over the dry labours of modern system makers, my earliest intention was to translate this agreeable writer, and by the help of a commentary, to make my work as amusing as I could. Let us dignify natural history ever so much with the grave appellation of a useful science, yet still we must confess, that it is the occupation of the idle and the speculative, more than of the ambitious part of mankind. My intention was to treat what I then conceived to

be an idle subject, in an idle manner; and not to hedge round plain and simple narratives with hard words, accumulated distinctions, ostentatious learning, and disquisitions that produced no conviction. Upon the appearance, however, of M. Buffon's work, I dropped my former plan and adopted the present, being convinced by his manner, that the best imitation of the ancients was to write from our own feelings, and to imitate nature.

It will be my chief pride, therefore, if this work may be found an innocent amusement for those who have nothing else to employ them, or who require a relaxation from labour. Professed naturalists will, no doubt, find it superficial; and yet I should hope, that even these will discover hints and remarks, gleaned from various reading, not wholly trite or elementary; I would wish for their approbation. But my chief ambition is to drag up the obscure and gloomy learning of the cell to open inspection; to strip it from its garb of austerity, and to shew the beauties of that form, which only the industrious and the inquisitive have been hitherto permitted to approach.

PREFACE

TO THE

BEAUTIES OF ENGLISH POETRY.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCCLXVII.

PREFACE.

My bookseller having informed me that there was no collection of English Poetry among us, of any estimation, I thought a few hours spent in making a proper selection would not be ill bestowed.

Compilations of this kind are chiefly designed for such as either want leisure, skill, or fortune, to choose for themselves; for persons whose professions turn them to different pursuits, or who, not yet arrived at sufficient maturity, require a guide to direct their application. To our youth, particularly, a publication of this sort may be useful; since, if compiled with any share of judgment, it may at once unite precept and example, shew them what is beautiful, and inform them why it is so: I therefore offer this, to the best of my judgment, as the best collection that has as yet appeared; though, as tastes are various, numbers will be of a very different opinion. Many, perhaps, may wish to see in it the poems of their favourite authors, others may wish that I had selected from works less generally read, and others still may wish that I had selected from their own. But my design was to give a useful, unaffected compilation; one that might tend to advance the reader's taste, and not impress him with exalted ideas of mine. Nothing is so common, and yet so absurd, as affectation in criticism.

The desire of being thought to have a more discerning taste than others, has often led writers to labour after error, and to be foremost in promoting deformity.

In this compilation, I run but few risks of that kind: every poem here is well known, and possessed, or the public has been long mistaken, of peculiar merit; every poem has, as Aristotle expresses it, a beginning, a middle, and an end, in which, however trifling the rule may seem, most of the poetry in our language is deficient. I claim no merit in the choice, as it was obvious, for in all languages best productions are most easily found. As to the short introductory criticisms to each poem, they are rather designed for boys than men; for it will be seen that I declined all refinement, satisfied with being obvious, and sincere. In short, if this work be useful in schools, or amusing in the closet, the merit all belongs to others; I have nothing to boast, and at best can expect, not applause, but pardon.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.

This seems to be Mr Pope's most finished production, and is, perhaps, the most perfect in our language. It exhibits stronger powers of imagination, more harmony of numbers, and a greater knowledge of the world, than any other of this poet's works: and it is probable, if our country were called upon to shew a specimen of their genius to foreigners, this would be the work here fixed upon.

IL PENSEROSO.

I have heard a very judicious critic say, that he had a higher idea of Milton's style in poetry, from the two following poems, than from his Paradise Lost. It is certain, the imagination shewn in them is correct and strong. The introduction to both in irregular measure is borrowed from the Italians, and hurts an English ear.

AN ELEGY,

WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD.

This is a very fine poem, but overloaded with epithet. The heroic measure, with alternate rhyme, is very properly adapted to the solemnity of the subject, as it is the slowest movement that our language admits of. The latter part of the poem is pathetic and interesting.

LONDON,

IN IMITATION OF THE THIRD SATIRE OF JUVENAL.

This poem of Mr Johnson's is the best imitation of the original that has appeared in our language, being possessed of all the force and satirical resentment of Juvenal. Imitation gives us a much truer idea of the ancients than even translation could do.

THE SCHOOL-MISTRESS,

IN IMITATION OF SPENSER.

This poem is one of those happinesses in which a poet excels himself, as there is nothing in all Shenstone which any way approaches it in merit; and, though I dislike the imitations of our old English poets in general, yet, on this minute subject, the antiquity of the style produces a very ludicrous solemnity.

COOPER'S HILL.

This poem by Denham, though it may have been exceeded by later attempts in description, yet deserves the highest applause, as it far surpasses all that went before it: the concluding part, though a little too much crowded, is very masterly.

ELOISA TO ABELARD.

The harmony of numbers in this poem is very fine. It is rather drawn out to too tedious a length, although the passions vary with great judgment. It may be considered as superior to any thing in the epistolary way; and the many translations which have been made of it into the modern languages, are in some measure a proof of this.

AN EPISTLE FROM MR PHILIPS,

TO THE

EARL OF DORSET.

The opening of this poem is incomparably fine. The latter part is tedious and trifling.

A LETTER FROM ITALY,

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

CHARLES, LORD HALIFAX, 1701.

Few poems have done more honour to English genius than this. There is in it a strain of political thinking, that was, at that time, new in our poetry. Had the harmony of this been equal to that of Pope's versification, it would be incontestably the finest poem in our language; but there is a dryness in the numbers, which greatly lessens the pleasure excited both by the poet's judgment and imagination.

ALEXANDER'S FEAST;

OR THE

POWER OF MUSIC.

AN ODE, IN HONOUR OF ST CECILIA'S DAY.

This ode has been more applauded, perhaps, than it has been felt; however, it is a very fine one, and gives its beauties, rather at a third or fourth, than at a first perusal.

ODE FOR MUSIC ON ST CECILIA'S DAY.

This ode has by many been thought equal to the former. As it is a repetition of Dryden's manner, it is so far inferior to him. The whole hint of Orpheus, with many of the lines, has been taken from an obscure Ode upon Music, published in Tate's Miscellanies.

THE SHEPHERD'S WEEK,

IN SIX PASTORALS.

These are Mr Gay's principal performance. They were originally intended, I suppose, as a burlesque on those of Philips; but, perhaps, without designing it, he has hit the true spirit of pastoral poetry. In fact, he more resembles Theocritus than any other English pastoral writer whatsoever. There runs through the whole a strain of rustic pleasantry, which should ever distinguish this species of composition; but how far the antiquated expressions used here may contribute to the humour, I will not determine; for my own part, I could wish the simplicity were preserved, without recurring to such obsolete antiquity for the manner of expressing it.

MAC FLECKNOE.

The severity of this satire, and the excellence of its versification, give it a distinguished rank in this species of composition. At present, an ordinary reader would scarcely suppose that Shadwell, who is here meant by Mac Flecknoe, was worth being chastised; and that Dryden, descending to such game, was like an eagle stooping to catch flies.

The truth however is, Shadwell at one time held divided reputation with this great poet. Every age produces its fashionable dunces, who, by following the transient topic or humour of the day, supply talkative ignorance with materials for conversation.

ON POETRY. A RHAPSODY.

Here follows one of the best versified poems in our language, and the most masterly production of its author. The severity with which Walpole is here treated, was in consequence of that minister's having refused to provide for Swift in England, when applied to for that purpose, in the year 1725 (if I remember right). The severity of a poet, however, gave Walpole very little uneasiness. A man whose schemes, like this minister's, seldom extended beyond the exigency of the year, but little regarded the contempt of posterity.

OF THE USE OF RICHES.

This poem, as Mr Pope tells us himself, cost much attention and labour; and, from the easiness that appears in it, one would be apt to think as much.

FROM THE DISPENSARY. CANTO VI.

This sixth canto of the Dispensary, by Dr Garth, has more merit than the whole preceding part of the poem, and, as I am told, in the first edition of

this work, it is more correct than as here exhibited; but that edition I have not been able to find. The praises bestowed on this poem are more than have been given to any other; but our approbation at present is cooler, for it owed part of its fame to party.

SELIM; OR, THE SHEPHERD'S MORAL.

The following eclogues, written by Mr Collins, are very pretty; the images, it must be owned, are not very local; for the pastoral subject could not well admit of it. The description of Asiatic magnificence and manners is a subject as yet unattempted amongst us, and, I believe, capable of furnishing a great variety of poetical imagery.

THE SPLENDID SHILLING.

This is reckoned the best parody of Milton in our language: it has been an hundred times imitated without success. The truth is, the first thing in this way must preclude all future attempts, for nothing is so easy as to burlesque any man's manner, when we are once shewed the way.

A PIPE OF TOBACCO,

IN IMITATION OF SIX SEVERAL AUTHORS.

Mr Hawkins Browne, the author of these, as I am told, had no good original manner of his own, yet we see how well he succeeds when he turns an imitator; for the following are rather imitations than ridiculous parodies.

A NIGHT PIECE ON DEATH.

The great fault of this piece, written by Dr Parnell, is, that it is in eight syllable lines, very improper for the solemnity of the subject; otherwise, the poem is natural, and the reflections just.

A FAIRY TALE. By Dr Parnell.

Never was the old manner of speaking more happily applied, or a tale better told, than this.

PALEMON AND LAVINIA.

Mr Thomson, though in general a verbose and affected poet, has told this story with unusual simplicity: it is rather given here for being much esteemed by the public, than by the editor.

THE BASTARD.

Almost all things written from the heart, as this certainly was, have some merit. The poet here describes sorrows and misfortunes which were by no means imaginary; and thus there runs a truth of thinking through this poem, without which it would be of little value, as Savage is, in other respects, but an indifferent poet.

THE POET AND HIS PATRON.

Mr More was a poet that never had justice done him while living; there are few of the moderns have a more correct taste, or a more pleasing manner of expressing their thoughts. It was upon these fables he chiefly founded his reputation, yet they are by no means his best production.

AN EPISTLE TO A LADY.

This little poem, by Mr Nugent, is very pleasing. The easiness of the poetry, and the justice of the thoughts, constitute its principal beauty.

HANS CARVEL.

This bagatelle, for which, by the bye, Mr Prior has got his greatest reputation, was a tale told in all the old Italian collections of jests, and borrowed from thence by Fontaine. It had been translated

once or twice before into English, yet was never regarded till it fell into the hands of Mr Prior.

A strong instance how much every thing is improved in the hands of a man of genius.

BAUCIS AND PHILEMON.

This poem is very fine, and, though in the same strain with the preceding, is yet superior.

TO THE EARL OF WARWICK,
ON THE DEATH OF MR ADDISON.

This elegy (by Mr Tickell) is one of the finest in our language: there is so little new that can be said upon the death of a friend, after the complaints of Ovid and the Latin Italians in this way, that one is surprised to see so much novelty in this to strike us, and so much interest to affect.

COLIN AND LUCY. A Ballad.

Through all Tickell's Works there is a strain of ballad-thinking, if I may so express it; and in this professed ballad he seems to have surpassed himself. It is, perhaps, the best in our language in this way.

THE TEARS OF SCOTLAND.

This ode, by Dr Smollett, does rather more honour to the author's feelings than his taste. The mechanical part, with regard to numbers and language, is not so perfect as so short a work as this requires; but the pathetic it contains, particularly in the last stanza but one, is exquisitely fine.

ON THE DEATH
OF THE
LORD PROTECTOR.

Our poetry was not quite harmonized in Waller's time; so that this, which would be now looked

upon as a slovenly sort of versification, was, with respect to the times in which it was written, almost a prodigy of harmony. A modern reader will chiefly be struck with the strength of thinking, and the turn of the compliments bestowed upon the usurper. Every body has heard the answer our poet made Charles II. who asked him how his poem upon Cromwell came to be finer than his panegyric upon himself? "Your Majesty," replies Waller, "knows that poets always succeed best in fiction."

THE STORY OF PHŒBUS AND DAPHNE, APPLIED.

The French claim this as belonging to them. To whomsoever it belongs, the thought is finely turned.

NIGHT THOUGHTS. By Dr Young.

These seem to be the best of the collection; from whence only the two first are taken. They are spoken of differently, either with exaggerated applause or contempt, as the reader's disposition is either turned to mirth or melancholy.

SATIRE I.

Young's Satires were in higher reputation when published than they stand in at present. He seems fonder of dazzling than pleasing; of raising our admiration for his wit, than our dislike of the follies he ridicules.

A PASTORAL BALLAD.

The ballads of Mr Shenstone are chiefly commended for the natural simplicity of the thoughts, and the harmony of the versification. However, they are not excellent in either.

PHŒBE. A Pastoral.

This, by Dr Byron, is a better effort than the preceding.

A SONG.

"Despairing beside a clear stream."

This, by Mr Rowe, is better than any thing of the kind in our language.

AN ESSAY ON POETRY.

This work, by the Duke of Buckingham, is enrolled among our great English productions. The precepts are sensible, the poetry not indifferent, but it has been praised more than it deserves.

CADENUS AND VANESSA.

This is thought one of Dr Swift's correctest pieces; its chief merit, indeed, is the elegant ease with which a story, but ill conceived in itself, is told.

ALMA; or, THE PROGRESS OF THE MIND.

Πάντα γέλως, καὶ πάντα κόνις, καὶ πάντα τὸ μηδέν·
Πάντα γὰρ ἐξ ἀλόγων ἐστὶ τὰ γιγνόμενα.

What Prior meant by this poem I can't understand: by the Greek motto to it, one would think it was either to laugh at the subject or his reader. There are some parts of it very fine; and let them save the badness of the rest.

PREFACE.

Dr Fordyce's excellent Sermons for Young Women, in some measure gave rise to the following compilation. In that work, where he so judiciously points out all the defects of female conduct to remedy them, and all the proper studies which they should pursue, with a view to improvement, poetry is one to which he particularly would attach them. He only objects to the danger of pursuing this charming study through all the immoralities and false pictures of happiness with which it abounds, and thus becoming the martyr of innocent curiosity.

In the following compilation, care has been taken to select, not only such pieces as innocence may read without a blush, but such as will even tend to strengthen that innocence. In this little work, a lady may find the most exquisite pleasure, while she is at the same time learning the duties of life; and, while she courts only entertainment, be deceived into wisdom. Indeed, this would be too great a boast in the preface to any original work; but here it can be made with safety, as every poem in the following collection would singly have procured an author great reputation.

They are divided into *Devotional*, *Moral*, and *Entertaining*, thus comprehending the three great

duties of life; that which we owe to God, to our neighbour, and to ourselves.

In the first part, it must be confessed, our English poets have not very much excelled. In that department, namely, the praise of our Maker, by which poetry began, and from which it deviated by time, we are most faultily deficient. There are one or two, however, particularly the *Deity*, by Mr Boyse; a poem, when it first came out, that lay for some time neglected, till introduced to public notice by Mr Hervey and Mr Fielding. In it the reader will perceive many striking pictures, and perhaps glow with a part of that gratitude which seems to have inspired the writer.

In the moral part I am more copious, from the same reason, because our language contains a large number of the kind. Voltaire, talking of our poets, gives them the preference in moral pieces to those of any other nation; and indeed no poets have better settled the bounds of duty, or more precisely determined the rules for conduct in life than ours. In this department, the fair reader will find the Muse has been solicitous to guide her, not with the allurements of a syren, but the integrity of a friend.

In the entertaining part, my greatest difficulty was what to reject. The materials lay in such plenty, that I was bewildered in my choice: in this case, then, I was solely determined by the tendency of the poem; and where I found one, however well executed, that seemed in the least tending to distort the judgment, or inflame the imagination, it was excluded without mercy. I have here and there, indeed, when one of particular beauty offered with a few blemishes, lopt off the defects; and thus, like the tyrant who fitted all strangers to the bed he had prepared for them, I have inserted some, by first adapting them to my

plan: we only differ in this, that he mutilated with a bad design, I from motives of a contrary nature.

It will be easier to condemn a compilation of this kind, than to prove its inutility. While young ladies are readers, and while their guardians are solicitous that they shall only read the best books, there can be no danger of a work of this kind being disagreeable. It offers, in a very small compass, the very flowers of our poetry, and that of a kind adapted to the sex supposed to be its readers. Poetry is an art, which no young lady can, or ought to be wholly ignorant of. The pleasure which it gives, and indeed the necessity of knowing enough of it to mix in modern conversation, will evince the usefulness of my design, which is to supply the highest and the most innocent entertainment at the smallest expense; as the poems in this collection, if sold singly, would amount to ten times the price of what I am able to afford the present.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

Printed by Walker & Greig,
Edinburgh.

3 1205 00457 1848

R.R.